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Edinburgh

WILSON'S

TALES OF THE BORDERS

AND OF SCOTLAND.

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"Old Tales I heard of woe or mirth,
Of lovers' sleights, of ladies' charms,
Of witches' spells, of warriors' arms,
Of patriot battles, won of old,
By Wallace wight and Bruce the Bold."
—SIR WALTER SCOTT.

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THE POOR SCHOLAR.

READER, if ever thou hast been in "Babylon the Great," or, in other words, in the overgrown metropolis of the southern portion of these kingdoms, peradventure you have observed melancholy-looking men, their countenances tinged with the "pale cast of thought," in suits of well-worn black, "a world too wide," creeping, edging, or shuffling along the streets, each belike with a bundle of papers peering from his pocket. In nine cases out of ten, these neglected-looking men are the poor scholars who instruct or amuse the world. You may also find them, with anxiety in their eyes, and hunger sitting at some upon their cheeks, wandering in the most secluded corners of the parks, enjoying, by way of a substitute for dinner, the apology which the air in the parks offers for the pure and unadulterated breath of heaven. Daily, too, they may be seen in the library of the museum, poring over an old volume, and concealing their shoes beneath the table, lest they should "prate" of the scholars' whereabouts," and ask of the venerable volume—"Are you or we oldest?" Or you may find them in a corner of some obscure coffee house, poring intently over the periodicals of the day, at intervals slowly sipping and mincing the cup of coffee and half slice of bread before them. But, in speaking of poor scholars generally, I keep you from the tale of our Poor Scholar.

You have heard of Longtown, which is a neat, respectable-looking, and remarkably clean little town, in Cumberland, on the banks of the Esk, near to what is called Solway Moss, and sometimes spoken of as the first or last town in England, in the same manner as Coldstream is mentioned as the first or last town in Scotland. Well, there dwelt in Longtown a respectable widow, named Musgrave. She derived an income

of about eighty pounds a-year from a property that had been bequeathed to her in the West Indies. She had an only son whose name was Robert, and who, after a respectable education in his native place, was bound as an apprentice to a medical practitioner in Carlisle. He afterwards attended the classes in Edinburgh; but, before he had taken out all the necessary tickets, and before he had obtained the diploma or qualification which was to enable him to use the word "Surgeon" after his name, something went wrong about the property that was bequeathed to his mother in the West Indies, her remittances ceased, and, after a tedious lawsuit, it was swallowed up altogether.

She was left in poverty—in utter destitution. The misfortune fell upon her heavily; she drooped, pined, mourned, and died; and Robert Musgrave, still under twenty, was left without money and without friends. His talents, however, had excited the notice of several of the professors under whom he had studied; and they, acquiring a knowledge of his circumstances, and feeling an interest in his fate, enabled him to take out his certificate as a member of the college of surgeons.

He now, with high hopes, and I need not say, a low pocket, commenced practice as a country surgeon in a small village on the Borders. It was a young man's dream. A surgeon in a country village, and especially a young one, is generally the worst paid man in it. The war between poverty and the necessity of appearing respectable, never ceases. The clergyman, be he churchman or dissenter, has a certain income, be it less or more; but the surgeon lives between the hand and the mouth; and he can hardly, considering his avocation, in Christian benevolence, pray for "daily bread." Such a prayer would be something akin to a grave-digger's for an east wind or a "green Christmas," which, as the adage hath it, "maketh a fat kirkyard."

Now Robert Musgrave was a young man possessed not only of what may be called talent, but what is more, of strong and ardent genius; while, young as he was, his professional skill would have done honour to a court physician. But, buried in the obscurity of a poor and secluded village, struggling between gentility and penury, shut out from all society congenial to his taste, education, and former habits, he la-

came heartless and callous, if not slovenly; and eventually, he sank into a sceptic from the *force of appearance.* For, be assured, gentle reader, if ye will study mankind closely, and examine into their outgoings and their incomings, and think of the *why* for every *wherefore,* ye will find that the reasoning of a shabby coat produces more converts to every-day free-thinking or infidelity, than the philosophy of Hobbes, the rhetoric of Shaftesbury, the wit of Voltaire, the sophistry of Hume, and the blackguard ribaldry of Paine, united. The neighbouring farmers admitted Doctor Musgrave, as they called him, to be clever; but they despised his poverty, and invited him to their tables only for amusement. Deprived of books, and without society, while his temperament was framed for both, and feeling himself slighted, he gradually lost his respectability and became a tippler, if not a drunkard.

I shall here follow out a portion of his history in a conversation which he had with a Cumberland farmer, one Peter Liddell, whom he met in London about three years after he had left his country practice on the Borders:—

"The longer I remained in ——," said he, "my situation became the more painful. I felt I was becoming something less than the equal of society I despised. I found that I had gradually sunk into the odious vice of drunkenness; that I was the companion only of the ignorant and the worthless; and poverty, eternal poverty and obscurity were all that appeared before me. But the dormant ambition of boyhood, the dreams that delighted my early years, did not wholly forsake me. I had long determined to leave the village and try my fortune in the world; but want of means prevented me. I resolved to tear adversity by the beard and face every obstacle. With difficulty, I gathered in as many debts as enabled me to proceed to Newcastle, and take a passage to London, where I arrived on the first of February, without friends, and almost without money; in fact, with not five shillings in my pocket."

"Poor fellow!" said Peter—and they were sitting together in a tavern in Fleet street, which is called a north country house, for Peter was in London on business, and having met the Doctor on the street, they went into the tavern to talk of their native hills, and the "old familiar faces." "Poor fellow!" added Peter; and, with a sort of sigh, added—"Ah, sirs! it

is really well said that the one half of the world doesna know how the other half lives. It would take planning to lay out those five shillings."

"It certainly did," said the scholar. "You are aware that my practice in the village, from a prejudice against what some called my religion, or rather my no religion, was exceedingly limited. In fact, I was a persecuted man, for principles of which I was as ignorant as themselves; and disdaining to accommodate my habits and conversation to their rules, the persecution increased, and the payments made to me became more limited than my practice. I bade fair to become an actual representative of Shakespeare's apothecary; and would assuredly have thought myself 'passing rich with forty pounds a-year.' But the one half of my practice would not pay the expense of wrapping the powders in paper. On sending to our village tobacconist's, I have had my own accounts returned as snuff-paper; and, though my success was not, I believe, inferior to most in the profession, my patients regarded paying me as throwing money away, or as an unnecessary charity; and never did the payments, taking one year with another, exceed thirty pounds."

"Poor fellow! do ye really say so?" responded Peter; "thirty pounds a-year!—and was that a'? And was ye really not an atheist or a deist, Doctor, as the people gied ye out to be?"

"Whatever I and the mass of mankind are in our practice, Mr. Liddell," he replied, "I am neither, when the small still voice of conscience speaks."

"Gie's your hand—gie's your hand, Doctor," cried Peter; "I ask your pardon for onything I ever thought or said respecting ye, as sincerely as ever man did. Conscience is as ye say, a sma' still voice; but I doubt it is one that many will hear aboon the sough o' friends at a deathbed, the thunders o' the day o' judgment, and the roaring and raging o' the bottomless pit. But ye say that ye had barely five shillings in your pocket when ye arrived in London here. How, in a' the world did ye manage to lay it out?"

"Sixpence," replied the scholar, "went in treating the captain to a glass of grog, when we came on shore, including one for myself."

"That was very foolishly spent, however," interrupted Peter.

"And it being night when we landed," added the Doctor, "another shilling was spent in the public-house for a bed."

"A bed!" exclaimed our Cumberland farmer; "man, had ye not the gumption to sleep aboord, or gie the captain the hint, after treating him wi' the glass. That was eighteenpence clean thrown awa; and only left ye wi' three and sixpence. Poor soul! what did ye do?"

"Beginning to reflect, in the morning," said the other, "that three and sixpence was not an inexhaustible sum, I agreed to pass over the very useful ceremony of a breakfast; and, strolling about, planning what to do, and marvelling at all I saw—after narrowly escaping being jostled to pieces, as I moved slowly from street to street, while every soul in the great city appeared to be walking for a wager but myself—towards three o'clock, I dined in an eating house, for sixpence by the side of a coal-heaver. The afternoon was also passed in dreamy wandering. After nightfall, I became dispirited and fatigued. I was still unable to form any definite plan of proceeding, and I more than once asked myself what I had come to London to do."

"Poor man! I doubt there are too many like ye," said Peter.

"I was satiated with the busy variety of the scene," he continued; "the very changes became as sameness, and I longed only for a place where I might lie down and rest, I obtained a lodging for the night, in a suspicious-looking public-house, for a sixpence; and rising early on the following morning, my second day in London was spent as the first had been, and at the same expense, save a penny—for on that day my dinner cost me but fivepence. My two shillings and a penny were now sacred, and I feared to incur the expense of a night's lodgings. I was passing what I discovered to be Covent Garden. Crowds were pressing into the theatre. I stood and ran my eyes over the play-bill. I saw the names Kemble! Cooke! Bannister! Siddons!—The temptation was irresistible.

"Irresistible!" cried Peter—"what the mischief do ye mean. I see nacthing irresistible in the case, unless ye just mean to tell me that ye are a born fool."

"Siddons! Kemble! Cooke! and Bannister!" proceeded our hero, "on the same boards, and on the same night! I

thought myself transported to Elysium! I looked for the word *Gallery*, pressed forward with the eager crowd, and threw down my shilling. 'Another shilling, sir,' said the man of checks. I had followed the stream of the two shilling gallery, and thus——"

"Good gracious!" exclaimed the farmer, raising his hands; "did ever man in his right judgment hear the like o' that? —ye're not to be pitied! I wonder ye didna think o' buying a strait jacket!—ye was fitter for it than a play-house. Doctor, I didna think ye had been such an idiot. But I must say that some mothers bring fools into the world after a'. Did ye really no turn back again?—or what did ye do wi' your last penny? It would be thrown away as wisely as the two shillings, I reckon."

"I plead guilty," said Robert; "I acted as a fool, but bore the consequences like a philosopher. My last shilling had disappeared. The performance proceeded—I was delighted, enraptured, overwhelmed. The curtain dropped. The house was crowded to suffocation—my throat was parched—and with my last penny—(keep your seat, Mr. Liddell)—with my last penny I bought an orange from a fruit-seller in the gallery. The second piece was concluded. The human mass moved every one to the tavern or their homes, a supper and a pillow, and I—I alone of the thousands—went forth penniless into the streets, hungry, shivering, and fatigued, to wander without hope!"

"And served ye right," said Peter—"I dinna pity ye, sir. No, no, after that I'm done wi' ye. But how did ye get through the night?"

"The day dawned," resumed Robert Musgrave, "and I was still wandering—fainting, trembling, cold and benumbed. I had long had some pretensions to literature. I was born in the midst of poetry. It sang around me from the deathless voice of my native Esk, hymning to its green woods and its massy crags. It looked down upon me from the thunder-belted brows of my native mountains, and drew my soul upwards to itself. It grew with my growth, it became a part of my being, and, in the midst of my debasement, it parted not from me."

"Famous! famous!—drat, ye're an orator, Doctor!" cried the farmer, in admiration of the eloquent fervour of his com-

tryman. "Cumberland!—and where is the county like it? I wish, Doctor, I had been a bishop for your sake—ye should have had a benefice."

"My luggage," continued the other, "consisted only of a chest containing little beyond books and manuscripts. With the same feeling which every author may be supposed to have for his productions, I considered mine were not inferior to others which were puffed and published. I say puffed and published; for, now-a-days, it is common for a puff to be both written and published before the work bepraised is in the hands of the printer."

"Coom, now, Maister Musgrave," said the farmer, "not so fast, if you please; I can believe anything that's possible in a reasonable way. But how a book can be praised before it be read and printed, or, as I should say, before it is a book, I canna comprehend. So ye mustna come over me in that way, Doctor."

"It is not so impossible as you imagine," replied the other; "you know that money is a powerful agent."

"Ay, troth do I," said the farmer; "now I understand ye. I know

> 'That money makes the mare to go,
> Whether she has legs or no.'"

"Well," resumed the surgeon, "laying the hope of fame and reward as an unction to my wounded spirit, I returned to the vessel, and entrusted my trunk to the care of a wharfinger, I took from it a bundle of manuscripts—consisting of a novel, poems, essays, and papers on medical subjects—and, with a beating heart, proceeded towards Paternoster Row—praying as I went. I passed every bookseller's in the street, measuring the countenance of himself and his shopmen. At length, after passing and repassing several doors a dozen times, as often having my feet upon their thresholds, half drawing my papers from my pocket and thrusting them back again, I ventured into one, and, after a few words awkwardly expressed, holding the manuscripts in my hands, I made known my business. The gentleman, without looking at my productions, but not without looking at me, said his hands were full, and hurried back to his desk. I called on six others; and though my reception with some was more courteous, my

success was the same. I applied to the eighth and last. A glimmering of hope returned with the first glance of his countenance. It was not what every one would term inviting; but genuine feeling glowed through a garb of roughness. He received me with politeness, looked over my papers, delicately asked me a few questions, which I neither knew how to answer nor how to evade; he hinted his fears that I had not written on subjects which were exactly in demand in the market, and, in conclusion, requested me to leave the manuscripts, and call on him on the following morning. I again went into the streets, to hold battle with hunger and anticipation. For several hours, hope and hope's fond dreams bore me up; but towards evening, and throughout the night, the wind blew cold and wildly, the rain fell unceasingly. I was drenched and almost motionless, and but for the interference of the patrols, I would fain have lain down to sleep, beneath the cover of a passage, on the damp earth."

"Oh, help us!" said Peter, "what is that o't? I know as well what it is to travel by night, and in a' weathers, as anybody; but, poor man! I had none o' your sufferings to contend wi'."

"The longed-for, and yet dreaded hour arrived," resumed the other. "I approached the shop with feelings as anxious, and not more enviable than those of a criminal when he is dragged to the bar. The publisher was out upon business, and one of his young men returned me my manuscripts, and a letter with his master's compliments and thanks. I do not remember leaving the shop. The stupefaction of death was dashed upon my soul. I believe that I appeared tranquil; but it was the tranquillity of misery immovable beneath its own load. In despair, I broke open the letter—a guinea fell from its folds at my feet."

"Heaven bless him!" interrupted the farmer.

"Amen!" responded the scholar, and continued—"Without waiting to read the contents of his note, I hurried into a tavern to allay the cravings of hunger, and to warm, or rather thaw, my almost frozen body. But I sickened, and could eat little. I had wanted food until, like a spoiled child, my appetite refused that for which it had yearned. With the still open letter upon my knee, as my joints began to feel the influence of returning heat, I suddenly sank, with my head

upon my bosom, into a deep, dreamless sleep; and being awoke by the rioting of some half-drunken men, I found one of them had made free with the back part of my letter to light his pipe, which had been addressed after the usual silly and absurd fashion common amongst literary men—who ought rather to set an example in despising vain frivolities—*R. Musgrave, Esq.* 'I beg your pardon, *Squire*,' said the fellow, in a tone of irony. 'Here's wishing you a pair of new shoes and health to wear them, *Squire*,' said a third, in the same tone, raising a tankard to his lips. And the party broke into a laugh of derision."

"Doctor!" exclaimed the farmer indignantly, ye deserved all ye got, if ye didna make a broom o' the bunch o' them, and sweep the house wi' the hair o' their heads."

"I am not remarkable for brooking insults," added Musgrave, "and of that more than one of the company had cause to be convinced. In his letter the bookseller spoke of my writings as displaying considerable originality and genius. Parts of them, he thought, exhibited marks of being written too hastily, and recommended their omission. He regretted that he durst not hazard their publication; as, unfortunately, too much depended upon patronage, connection, or the influence of a name. He recommended publishing by subscription, and brought forward the example of Pope, Burns, and others, to render the advice palatable, as children receive sweet-meats after acid drugs. He begged to enclose a guinea for two copies to himself; and, wishing me success, he said it would afford him pleasure, by every means in his power, to forward the publication. I will not exhaust your patience by a recital of calamities which a critic, ignorant of their meaning, or ashamed to look back on them, would pronounce vulgar and in bad taste. Being contented with the luxury of half a bed, for which I paid sixpence, I experienced the truth of the proverb, that 'misery maketh a man acquainted with strange bed-fellows.' Beggars, thieves, men of all nations, and of all climes and colours, shared my pillow. But I resolved to husband my guinea, indulging myself with sleeping one night and wandering the streets the next alternately. It was in vain, in the meantime, that I used every effort to obtain the situation of assistant-surgeon. In London, more perhaps than in any city, appearance is everything.

and I carried my own condemnation written on my ruined garments."

"Troth, I have remarked there is some truth in what ye say, Doctor," said the farmer; "if a man wishes to prosper, he should never, if possible, appear like a shorn sheep wi' the fleece bare on his back."

"My money," added the scholar, was again reduced to five shillings; and, to ward off the approach of starvation, I was compelled to renounce the comforts of a bed once in forty-eight hours, as a luxury I could no longer afford. The very shoes left my feet with ceaseless wandering. My feet bled as I walked. My hat became shapeless; I was ashamed to look on it. The wind began to sport through my garments, and found loopholes for his sport. My person became like a moving spirit of famine, clothed with poverty, and shivering in a storm. My spirit was not broken, but it was bowed down. Yielding to the hope of despair, I attempted publishing by subscription. The plan may succeed where a man is known, where he has friends to push the subscription for him, or where he has impudence that is proof against insult; but, amongst strangers, it is a hopeless task. I was doomed to endure indignities from ignorant and contemptible menials, who glanced at my figure, thrust the doors in my face, as on a common beggar! O, sir! the recollection haunts me still. It is the only act of my life on which I cannot think without a burning blush coming over my face. I need not say it was unsuccessful. For thirty successive nights, I wandered through the streets of this city, exposed to the storms of February and the bleak winds of March, sleeping as I moved along, or standing and knowing not that I stood, till aroused by the jest of a passing unfortunate, or rudely driven on by the watchmen of the night. Ten times in the hour, I would stumble beneath the oppression of sleep to the ground. But I will not detail those days and nights of misery. The scenes I then encountered would provoke a smile and a tear at the same moment. They were a mingling of the ludicrous and the wretched. Yet, to give you but one or two instances out of many:—One cold and weary night, sleep came upon me like death itself. I was wandering along Thames Street, and came to Billingsgate. Porters and oyster-sellers were lounging about the market, some sitting smoking, laughing, or

drinking, though it was not an hour past midnight. I sought shelter beneath the sheds, and stretched myself upon one of the tables or benches. But the cold was intense. My very blood seemed freezing. I arose and removed to a corner of the market over the side of the river, and there, there was one of the open shops, stalls, or sheds, the one side of which was screened by a large and loosely hanging canvas sign, facing the river, of more than six feet square, setting forth the occupant of the stall as fishmonger, oyster-dealer, and so forth. Through the lamplight and starlight, I cast a longing and envious look at the loose and painted canvas. I took it down, and stretching myself upon the bench, spread it over me as a blanket. It was the most comfortable covering I had had for many nights. But scarce had sleep, which pressed heavily upon me, sealed up my eyelids, when I was aroused by a rude hand shaking me by the shoulder, and a ruder voice, exclaiming—'Hollo! who have we got here?' It was the proprietor of the shed. I started—rubbed my eyes—stammered out an apology. A crowd of fishwomen and porters gathered round us. The fishmonger spoke of calling for the police. I expostulated. He offered to hold me. I raised my hand, and I am thankful that his table, which was a fixture, was between him and the river. I rushed through the crowd; and whether the blow, which I had lent the fishmonger, operated upon their courage and humanity, I cannot tell, but they made way for me. I had not, however, proceeded far, when sleep again became too much for me, and too literally, I 'caught myself tripping.' Its influence was irresistible, and St. Paul's had not yet chimed the hour of three. I saw a cart standing beneath an open gateway; and, with gratitude in my heart, I lay down on it as a couch of luxury. But there I had not lain long when I was awoke by a person at my side. I started.

"'Don't be afraid, sir,' said the intruder, 'it is only a poor brother in misfortune.'

"I turned round and glanced at him through the dim light, but scarce could I discover what manner of man he was, till sleep again 'locked up my senses in forgetfulness.' A little after daybreak, I awoke shivering, my joints stiff, my teeth chattering together, and my whole body a mass of pain. I perceived that my 'poor brother in misfortune' was, or rather I ought to say, had been dressed respectably, yea, even

fashionably. He carried with him a portfolio, which, even in his sleep, he pressed closely beneath his arm. As I arose, he awoke; and, groaning, he arose also and accompanied me. I know not whether it was mutual wretchedness, or the portfolio beneath his arm, that caused me to feel a regard for him at the first glance; but, certain it is, I was prepossessed in his favour. We were a couple of strange, miserable-looking characters, as we went drowsily, laggardly, and lamely up Fish Street Hill together. I observed the night-watchmen, who had not left their beat, turned round, and even held up their lanterns—though the morning's light was well advanced—and examined us as we passed. As though our errand or our thoughts were the same, we proceeded towards the Park together; and when the sun arose, he opened his portfolio, and exhibited it to me. He was an artist, and an artist, too, of high promise. His portfolio contained many bold and vigorous pencil sketches, where soul, taste, and a daring hand were exemplified. He had also a number of beautiful pieces in water-colours, which showed that his touch was delicate as well as bold. I took my pencil, and wrote a few lines on the back of one of the Bristol boards on which one of the subjects was sketched, and the artist and I became friends. Neither of us had wherewith to purchase a breakfast; but, in the forenoon, he had to call upon a printseller in the Strand with some of his pieces in water-colours, and we parted with a promise to meet again on the following day. But an accident, which I shall afterwards mention, prevented me from keeping my engagement; and we parted without the one knowing the name of the other. I have not again met with him; but, until this hour, I regret that I learned not the name of a young artist, whom I met with under such circumstances, and whose productions manifested high genius, a correct taste, and a skilful hand. Now, at this period, sir, I should tell you that the greater part of the day was generally spent in attempts to sleep upon the seats in the Park; and, as dreadful as the pangs of hunger were, at length (and this is no idle saying), I could have been content to die beneath their rage, to have purchased but one hour of rest and repose. The agony of hunger yields to the agony of sleep."

"And do you really say, Doctor," inquired the farmer,

"that ye have suffered a' this in a Christian land, even in this city? I hardly think it possible."

"Some may doubt it," replied Robert earnestly; "but the remembrance of what I have endured will live as a coal of fire in my heart for ever; and the fiftieth part of what I suffered has not been told you. But, sir, before I proceed farther with my story, allow me to go back to another part of my history, and advert to another circumstance. You will remember—it is more than a dozen years ago—a military gentleman, whom we generally called Colonel Forster, took up his residence on the banks of the Esk, a few miles from Longtown. He was, I believe, a Lieutenant-Colonel in the service of the East India Company."

"I remember him perfectly well, Mr. Musgrave," said the farmer, "and know him yet; and, moreover, I also remember that ye was remarkably fond of his daughter Bertha, and that it was said that it wasna her beauty ye was in love wi' but her siller; for the Colonel was understood to be a perfect Nabob, and I have heard that he forbade you to come about the house."

"Sir," continued Musgrave—and there was a glow of indignation on his countenance—"I care not what the world may have said, nor what they do say. The lark greeteth not the dawning of the dawn with more fervent delight than I first beheld the fair countenance of Bertha Forster. I knew not that her father was rich, and, when I did know it, I grieved that he was so. But to me she plighted her first vow, and pledged her 'maiden troth;' and, though I knew that, by her fulfilling it, I should take the hand of a penniless bride—for it is true that her father threatened to disinherit her if she kept my company, and to leave all that he was possessed of to a son in India—yet I loved her the more. I loved her for herself, and our feelings were reciprocal. Ever shall I remember the night on which we parted, previous to my leaving Cumberland for this city. It was in a deep wood, near her father's house. The Esk murmured by our feet, and the grey twilight fell over us. The evening-star was in the heavens, and the wood, the star, the river, and the twilight, were the witnesses of our tears and of our vows. But you are past the period of life when the recital of such things can be interesting; and respect for her whom my soul worships, forbids me to say more.

*****

Yet, although her father despised and spurned me, we parted, with a promise to write to each other, with a declaration to preserve our plighted vows inviolate even unto death. It was agreed that I should send my letters to her, addressed to an humble but mutual friend. But I was long in London ere I wrote; for I had not the means of writing; and, when an answer came to that letter—oh! I never knew real misery till then! She knew not the depth of my wretchedness—the extremeness of my poverty! I beheld my name on the board at the post-office amongst the list of persons whose residence could not be found. Day after day I visited it, and stood with my eyes fixed upon my own name, while my heart was ready to burst with agony and anxiety. I knew the letter was from my Bertha; but I had not a few pence necessary to relieve it. I had no means of obtaining them. I was a penniless, houseless stranger, unknown to every one in this vast city. And, after gazing on the board till my eyes were dimmed by rising tears, and my brain excited almost to madness, I was wont to flee from the city; and often, in solitude and in darkness, pour forth the bitterness of my spirit to the night winds. Often, at such times, in the excess of misery, I have wrung my hands together, and exclaimed aloud—

"'What would my poor Bertha think, if she knew this?'

"At length the list of names amongst which mine appeared, was removed from the post-office and replaced by others; and when, after obtaining the means of paying for the letter, I made inquiry after it, I was informed that it had been returned. I doubted not but that she would imagine I had forgotten her; and, as I turned away in disappointment and in hopelessness, I said unto myself—'Farewell, my Bertha!'"

"Help us, Doctor!" exclaimed Peter; "is it really posssible that anybody can have been so put about for a thirteenpence matter? Yet, how do we fling away shilling after shilling, day after day, without ever thinking o' the road they are going! And how ready we are to say about anything—'Oh, it was only a shilling!' But, Doctor, when ye think what a relief 'only a shilling' would have given to your mind at that moment, surely ye will have considered weel the length and breadth o' every sixpence ye have spent since then. It will be a lesson to me, however, to be more cautious how I ever spend thirteenpence again; and, if I find myself ready to

fling it away on any unwiselike or unprofitable purposes, I will just think—'What good will what I am going to do wi' my money, do me?—and what would Doctor Musgrave have given for it, when he saw the letter from his sweetheart, and hadna the thirteenpence to open it?' As sure as death!—as we used to say at school, and that is gay sure—had ony other body told me what ye have said but yoursel' I would have laughed at it. Had I read it in print, I wouldna have believed it. But there is one thing in it, and that is, it just shows us what poor dependent creatures we are one upon another. Doctor, ye had a sair trial there for a sma' matter."

"You, sir," continued Mr. Musgrave, "no doubt consider London an immense, almost a limitless city; but, sir, it is too small for the bounds of misery. Often have I wandered from Knightsbridge to Mile End, yea, from Cheswick to the East India Docks, and slowly returned the way I came, thinking that daylight would never break, and wondering how people spoke of London as a great city. They, sir, who would really know the limits of London, must shake hands with misery as I have done. They must wander its streets by night, without food and without hope, and they will marvel how short they are. People talk of losing themselves amongst the intricacies and many turnings of this city. It is nonsense, sir—sheer stupidity. Let them once be lost in misery, in penniless, houseless wretchedness, and should a purse show itself at their feet, they would discover where they were in a moment. The man who has no money never loses himself in London—none do, but fools who have it to lose. But, sir, it was on the very night after I had attempted to sleep in Billingsgate, beneath the comfortable covering of a fishmonger's sign, and dreamed by the side of an artist in a drayman's cart, that I was wandering on the borough side of the river, and had proceeded nearly three miles beyond the Elephant and Castle, when cries for assistance roused me from my walking dream. I rushed forward. A gentleman in an open carriage, with his servant, were attacked by four footpads, armed with knives and bludgeons. I took up a stone from the road, and, hurling it at the head of one of the robbers, when within a few yards of them, stretched him on the ground. We were then man to man. I sprung upon another—I grappled with him, overpowered

him, and wrenched the bludgeon from his hands, but not until he had plunged his knife into my side. It was a bad wound, but not a dangerons one. With the bludgeon which I had wrenched from the hand of the robber, I rushed upon another of his associates, who I found had that moment overcome the gentleman to whose rescue I had providentially arrived. I dealt him a heavy and a hearty blow upon his busiest arm, which causing him to find that he had only his limbs left, he took to his heels and ran. The two whom I had already overthrown, had anticipated him in his flight, and, on seeing him run, the fourth followed their example. I attempted to follow them, but fell upon the ground from loss of blood. The gentleman was himself wounded, but slightly; and he, with his servant, raising me from the ground, and placing me in his carriage conveyed me to the nearest inn. There, after a surgeon had been sent for, and my wound dressed, he requested to know who I was, and to whom he was indebted for his liberty and his life. But in all that concerned myself I was silent; and, in answer to all questions as to whom or what I was, I was dumb. My wound was deep, though not dangerous; and all that I regretted was, that I should be left an invalid in an inn, while I had nothing to recompence those who attended on me. After earnestly entreating to know who I was, or what was my name—though I have reason to believe that from my dejected appearance he entertained a most sorry idea of me, the gentleman whom I had rescued proceeded onwards to London. But I was silent to all his inquiries. Pride sealed up my tongue, and I shook my head and said nothing. I could not speak—shame and poverty tortured me more than any wound.

"Within an hour he proceeded on his journey; and, on the following day, he returned with a medical gentleman to visit me. It was with difficulty that I could sit up in my bed to welcome them. The man of surgery began by asking many questions, which I answered like a true Scotsman, by asking others which startled him; and I heard him whisper to him whom I had rescued,

"'Sir, he is, without doubt, a member of my profession.'

"The gentleman—I mean him whom I rescued from the ruffians—came forward to me; he took my hand in his—

most earnestly he took it—and, as he held it, there was something like a tear—a tear of gratitude rolling in his eyes.

"'Sir, said he, 'to your courage I owe my life. Allow me to ask by what name I shall call my deliverer. It is evident that you are not, or that you have not always been, what your present appearance bespeaks. Let me know, therefore, how I am to thank you—how I can reward you as I ought.'

"'Sir,' answered I, 'you are a stranger to me, so am I to you. Let us remain so. If you speak of reward, you will cause me to regret what I did in attempting your rescue. Whatever I am, whatever I have been, matters not. I saw a fellow-man attacked and overpowered, and I attempted to deliver him. The humblest animal, prompted by its instinct, would have done the same. I am entitled to no thanks for what I have done—and, above all, I wish no questions asked of me."

"Faith, Doctor, ye answered nobly, and just as ye ought to have, if ye had had a hundred pounds in your pocket; but, man, ye stood in your ain light. There is nae saying what he might have done for you. It might hae been the king or the prime minister for onything ye kenned."

"He might," resumed the scholar; "but he rejoined, 'Sir, I admire the independence of your spirit, but wherefore should you, without cause, reject the acquaintance of one who seeks your friendship? You have endangered your life to save mine—what stronger claim could you have on my everlasting gratitude? If common feelings prompted you to rescue me, suffer me not to leave you until I have testified that I am actuated by such feelings, in common with yourself. You refuse to tell me your name; mine is William Forster, a Colonel in the service of the East India Company.'

"At the mention of his name, my heart leaped within me. The brother of my Bertha, and of whom I have spoken, was in the service of the East India Company. I dreaded that he and the individual I had saved, might be the same person, and I resolved, more determinedly than before, to conceal from him my name and circumstances. But, finding he could learn nothing from me, he offered me money. O sir! at that time I could have taken his life—I could have taken my own. To what have I sunk, I thought, or what am I now, that I should be treated as the veriest beggar that crawls upon the streets!

'Sir,' I exclaimed, wildly, 'keep your gold—your dross—your insulting dross. I did not assist you in your hour of need, that you should insult my situation by a mendicant's reward. I, sir, have the feelings of a gentleman as well as you, whatever I may now seem—therefore torment me not.' He informed me that he had to leave London on the following day; and he entreated that I would tell him who I was, that he might show that he was grateful for what I had done, in a way that might not be painful to my feelings. But the thought that he was the brother of my Bertha, haunted me, maddened me, and I waved my hand to him and cried—'Away! away!' His countenance bespoke him to be a man to whom I could have poured forth my whole soul; but even in that countenance I read her lineaments, and my soul moved like an agitated thing that I could feel within me, as I gazed on them.

"'Go, sir,' I exclaimed; 'and if you will be grateful, be so to one who rejoices in having been instrumental in assisting you. Leave me. I ask no more, for your questions torture me and your pecuniary offers insult me.'

"He left me, but never did I behold a man part from another more reluctantly, or one who was more under the influence of strong emotion. My wound confined me to the inn for five weeks, and, during much of that time, my thoughts were distracted regarding the bill of the innkeeper. But one day he came to me and said—

"'Sir, I don't know how you and the gentleman whom you rescued from the highwaymen stand; but one thing I know, he is a gentleman every inch of him. He has paid for all that you have had, or may have for a month to come; and here, master, are fifty pounds which he left me to give to you in as delicate a way as I could, for, as he said, you were rather proud-spirited. Now, master, here is the money, and he was as safe in trusting it in my hands as if he had put it in the bank.'

"I knew not what to do; but, after a struggle, and a severe one, I accepted the money. You may despise me for what I did——"

"Me despise you!" cried the farmer; "for what, I would like to ken? It is the only wiselike action I have heard you say that you did. The man that would despise another for taking fifty pounds where it was deserved, is a being that doesna understand what money is, or what it was made for.

They may despise ye that like, Doctor, upon that account, but it winna be me."

"Well, sir," resumed Musgrave, "with the fifty pounds in my pocket, I again appeared upon the streets of London. But a change had passed over me. Even the policemen who before had ordered me to 'walk on,' knew me not. I was another man—I was as one on whom fashion shed its sunning influence. I again endeavoured to obtain a situation as an assistant-surgeon, but the attempt was unsuccessful. I should have told you that it was owing to being confined with my wound that I was unable to meet my 'brother in misfortune,' the artist of whom I have spoken. I now tried my fortune as a writer for the magazines, and was paid for what I wrote, even liberally, as I considered it. But there was one drawback attending this liberality: though I could write an article for which I received three, four, or seven guineas, in a day (for authors always calculate in guineas though they are paid in pounds), yet it was not every day, neither was it every month, that I could get such an article accepted; and it was not every magazine that admitted me as a contributor. But by such writing I managed to live; and, as my name became known, I felt less of the misery which I endured when I first embarked in the precarious trade of authorship. Yet a precarious trade I still found it to be. I was enabled to live, but I lived between the hand and the mouth.

"The publisher whom I have already mentioned as having given a guinea towards the publishing of my works by subscription, engaged me to translate a novel from the French, and a small work from the Italian, of which language I had but a scanty knowledge. But it does not require the perfect knowledge of a language to be a translator, which many consider necessary."

"I canna say," said Peter; "I must confess ye are out o' my depths there—but get on wi' your story, for I am not sure but I may have something to tell ye."

"Well, sir," resumed the scholar, "after the translations had appeared, and when the seductions of a literary life, notwithstanding all its privations and all its uncertainty, had induced me to abandon all thoughts of pursuing my own profession, I determined to write for the stage. It would be tedious for me to tell you of all the difficulties I had to en-

counter, before I could obtain an audience of the theatrical managers, or what was called the committee of management. I found them more difficult of access than the Cham of Tartary. As well might I have undertaken a mission to Pekin, with the intent of pulling the celestial emperor by the button. But at length my object was attained. A tragedy that I had written was accepted and announced for representation. The eventful night came. The new drama—my drama—was to be performed. The first scene went off in silence—in utter silence—and often the actors mangled the lines most miserably. They forgot Hamlet's advice. But, as the first act was concluded, pit, boxes, and gallery, burst into a tumult of applause. I was seated in the pit. The sweat broke forth upon my brow. Vanity wrought triumphantly in my bosom. I was the greatest man in London. The second, the third, the fourth, the fifth acts concluded in the same manner. The curtain fell, and the audience shouted—'The author! the author!' For this tribute of public approbation I was not prepared. The stage-manager came to me, and still the audience in the gallery kept thundering and shouting—'The author! the author!' He insisted that I should appear upon the stage, and before the audience. Vain as I was, I sickened at his words; but he took my hand and led me forth I became as a thing that moves, without a consciousness or power over its moving. I had become pale as death. They led me to what they call the green-room, and they put rouge upon my face. But it was in vain, and the cold sweat swept it away, and left my countenance as if covered with wounds. I was led upon the stage as a sheep is led to the slaughter. The lights flashed on me, and I beheld twice a thousand eyes fixed upon me. I knew not how to act. I trembled—bowed—threw my eyes in bewilderment over the multitude; but, as I was about to address them, on whom amongst that mixed assembly should my eyes fall, but on my Bertha! I started. A frenzy came upon me. I sprang towards the pit. Yet it is in vain for me to tell you, for I know not what I did. She sat in a box immediately facing me. I heard a woman's scream. I knew it came from where she was. The multitude seemed rising and moving around me, and every eye was on me. But I cannot describe to you what I felt or what I saw. I became unconscious. I knew only that I had

seen her, and that she was somewhere. There was a noise like that of many waters in my ears. My head went round —my eyes were blind. When I recovered, I was seated in the green room, and the actors in their strange dresses surrounded me. They endeavoured to restore me to consciousness, as though I had been a sickly maiden that had fainted in their arms; and when I did recover from the sickness and insanity that came over me—

"'Where—oh, where,' I cried, 'is my Bertha?'

"I remember not of having done so; but I have been told that I did. You may think, sir, that I acted wildly, as a madman, or as a fool; but, before you condemn, think of what I had endured—of my recent misery, and of my vanity, when shout rose on shout, and the cry from the assembled thousands was—'The author! the author!' Such changes, sir, were enough to turn a steadier head than mine."

"For my part, Doctor," said Peter, "I have no notion o' plays; I never saw one in my life, and I canna say that I a'thegither comprehend ye. But let me hear about Miss Bertha."

"All that I could learn concerning her was," resumed Musgrave, "that a young lady in the boxes had uttered a sudden scream as she beheld me and the strange bewilderment that came over me, but that she had immediately been conveyed away by her friends in a coach. This only have I been able to learn. But it was she. Though all else that took place is as a wreck upon my memory, I see her before me now as I at that moment beheld her; I still see her one wild look that entered my soul, and I yet hear her heart-piercing cry, which brought delirium upon me, and rendered me dead to every other sound. But, from that night, I have been able to hear no more concerning her. I have sought her in church and in chapel, in the theatres and in the public walks, but never again have I beheld her. Often also have I written to Cumberland; but my letters have remained unanswered or been returned. She has forsaken me, or she has been compelled to forsake me; for when I last beheld her, her face still beamed with affection, and her wild and sudden cry was the offspring of an old but a still living affection."

"I hear by what ye say, Doctor," rejoined the farmer,

"that ye are as fond o' Miss Bertha as ever. Now, as I said to ye before, I am not certain but what I have something that ye might wish to hear, to communicate to ye; and, before doing so, with your permission, I would just ask you one or two plain questions. Ye have told me a great deal of the miserable state ye was in after ye came to London, and I would just like to ask ye if ye are better off now, and how, and in what respect ye are so? I trust, therefore, that ye will by no means think the question impertinent; for I assure you, it is for your sake that I ask it, and not for any gratification to myself."

"Well, sir," answered the scholar, "to be as plain with you as you desire, I have shaken hands with privation, and left it upon the road, to form the acquaintance of those who may follow me; or to be more plain with you, I found that literature was a good staff but a bad crutch; and as I began to gather my feet, I used it accordingly. In a word, as my name became known amongst men, my labours became more and more profitable; and, three years ago, thinking that I had obtained the means of doing so, I made an attempt to resume my profession as a surgeon. For many months it was but an attempt, and a hopeless one, too; but gradually practice dawned or crept upon me. I am now employed as well as other members of my profession are; and with the assistance of my literary labours, I look back upon the penury with which I struggled, and wish it to remain where I left it. But though I have known something of the moonshine of fame as it has scattered its rays upon my head; and felt also the influence of the warmer beams of profit as I began to bask in the sun of popularity, yet there was and there is one dark and unsunned spot in my heart—and that is the remembrance of my Bertha. Still does imagination conjure up her sudden glance, her one wild cry and look of agony, as I came forward to receive the plaudits of the multitude, when as the bay-leaves were circling my brow, the prickly brier was rudely drawn across my bosom."

"Well, Doctor," said Peter, "ye have not just spoken so plain as I could have wished; but, I dare to say, that I comprehend ye. When ye eat a meal now, ye ken where the next is to come from; and if Miss Bertha still thinks o' ye, and were to gie ye her hand, there would be no likelihood

o' her being brought in contact with the privations with which ye have manfully struggled, and which I am happy to hear (and I may say, more happy to perceive—for a person's own eyes are excellent witnesses), ye have overcome. Now, sir, hearken to me, for I have something to tell ye. I had always a sort o' liking for ye, Doctor; and though I did see ye foolish and stupid in many things, yet I was sorry for ye, and I said I believed that ye was a lad o' real genius, and of a right heart at the bottom. More than that, I said that if ye minded your hand, ye would be heard tell of in the world—and I have not been mistaken; for, even down in Cumberland, we have seen your name in the papers; and a hundred times have I said to my neighbours—'I always told ye that lad would rise to something.' But now, sir—now to the main subject, the one in which you will feel the greatest interest. Ye say that ye have again and again wrote to Miss Bertha in Cumberland, and never got an answer. I am in no way surprised at that at all; and for this simple reason, that old Colonel Forster left Eskside five years ago, and went to reside near a place they call Elstree, about ten miles from this city. Now, the way in which I am acquainted with the circumstance is this:—About a year after ye left, the old Nabob, as we used to ca' him, bought the farm that I rented, and became my landlord. Therefore, when he came to live in this quarter, I had to send my rents here. But, sir, he understands that I am in London—for I just handed him my rent, being here, the other day—and he has invited me to dine wi' him at his house to-morrow. Now, sir, if ye hae nae objections, I will just tak you out wi' me as an old friend; and if ye're not made welcome, I shall not be welcome either. So, say the word—will ye go wi' me, or will ye not?"

"I will—yes, yes, I will!" answered Mr. Musgrave, eagerly.

"Well, well," said Peter, "there need be no more about it, then—say that I meet you at this house to-morrow, at two o'clock."

"Agreed," replied the other.

"But," returned Peter, "there is one thing I forgot to tell ye, and that is, that I understand Miss Bertha is on the eve of being married, and highly married, too, they say wi'

us. Therefore, ye will not be surprised if ye find your former acquaintance forgotten, or seemingly forgotten, which, in such matters, amounts to somewhat about the same thing."

On the following day, Mr. Peter Liddell and Robert Musgrave entered a cab in Fleet Street together, and proceeded towards Elstree.

"Now," said Peter, as they approached the residence of his landlord, "I believe that I may be running my head against a wall; for I am well aware that the old Colonel never liked ye. Ye are one that would be unwelcome at any time, but doubly so at a time like this, when his daughter is on the point of being married. But I will tell ye what it is—I am just as independent as he is. I am as able to live without the help o' the landlord, as the landlord is to live without the help o' the tenant. Therefore, if he puts down his brows at you when we are introduced, I will show him the back o' my coat, and so good day to him."

"I believe, then," said Musgrave, "that with him I shall be no welcome guest; but, if Bertha welcome me, it is enough. You have spoken to me of her intended marriage —be it so. If she has forgotten me, if she has ceased to care for me, I will look upon her and bless her in remembrance of days which have passed away as the shadow of a cloud passeth over the earth. But with that blessing hope will depart; for, sir, it was the remembrance of her that sustained me in all my struggles. It was the hope that she might, would one day be mine, that induced me to hope against hope, to wrestle with despair. For her sake only have I sought for fame, as a miser would seek after hidden treasure; and when it began to throw its light and its sunniness over me she was the flower that rendered sunlight beautiful—for what is there lovely in light, but as a thing which maketh the face of the earth fair to look upon?"

They drew up at the door of the Colonel's residence, and were ushered into a room where he and a party of his friends sat. Peter, who was what people in the south would call a *'cute* man, was beginning to make an apology, saying—

"I beg your pardon, Colonel, for the liberty I have taken; but meeting with my old friend, Doctor Musgrave, yesterday, I prevailed on him to come out wi' me, as we were

a' Cumberland folk together; and, though he is a great man now——"

But, while Peter spoke, one of the company started forward. He grasped our hero by the hand, and exclaimed—

"My deliverer! Long and anxiously have I sought for you; but until this hour, nothing have I been able to learn respecting you. Father," he added, "this is the gentleman of whom a hundred times you have heard me speak, as having, at the peril of his own life, saved mine. I have never known or met him again until now. Thank him with me." And, as he spoke, he held the Doctor's hand between his.

The old man rose. He evidently laboured to speak to the stranger; but other feelings obtained the mastery. He stretched out his hand. He touched Robert Musgrave's—he coldly bowed to him. The blood left his face.

"Father!" exclaimed the son, "you are ill. Hath grati tude——" But he paused as he beheld the expression of his father's features. They betrayed anger and agony at the same moment.

"Son," said he, "I would speak with you: that man—that man," and he pointed to the scholar impatiently; and beckoning to his son, he rose to leave the room.

"Sir," said Musgrave, proudly, "if my presence trouble you, I can withdraw."

"My friend, what mean you?—what means my father?" asked the brother of Bertha, who was, indeed, the same individual that the scholar had rescued.

"I dinna ken," answered Peter Liddell; "but, if Doctor Musgrave go to the door, I go to the door too."

The father and the son looked at each other. The glance of the latter sought from the former an explanation.

At that instant, the door opened, and the much talked of Bertha entered the room.

"Bertha!" exclaimed Musgrave, and stepped forward, as if unconscious of what he did.

"Robert!" she rejoined, clasping her hands together. She started—she fell back—her brother supported her in his arms.

"Bertha!—father!—friend!" he exclaimed, hastily glancing to each as he spoke, "what means this?"

A man of middle age rose, and as he hurried from the room, said—

"Farewell, Forster," addressing the old man—"you have deceived, you have insulted me. The man who is to be your daughter's husband is with her now."

It was the intended husband of Bertha that so spoke, and left the apartment. The old Colonel rose to follow him.

"Stay, father," said his son—"what I have now witnessed requires an explanation. The stranger, to whom I owe my life, you have seen before—my sister has seen him—and there is something connected with your acquaintance with each other I must understand."

"Yes," cried the old man, "I have seen him before—I have—I have."

"Bertha?" said his son; but she raised her hands before her face and wept.

"Sir," said the younger Forster, "I can be grateful. Though I am not acquainted with you, my sister is. Let me call my deliverer *brother!*" And he took the hand of his weeping sister and placed it in that of Robert Musgrave.

The old man started; but his son soothed him. And Robert Musgrave stood with the hand of Bertha Forster locked in his; and within a few weeks he called that hand his own, and was happy—and the sufferings that the Poor Scholar had endured became as a tale that is told.

REUBEN PURVES;

OR,

THE SPECULATOR.

SPECULATION is the soul of business, it is the mainspring of improvement, it is essential to prosperity. Burns has signified that he could not stoop to crawl into what he considered as the narrow holes of bargain-making; and nine out of every ten persons who consider themselves high-minded profess to sympathise with him, and say he was right. But our immortal bard, in so saying, looked only at the odds and ends—the corners and the disjointed extremities of bargain-making, properly so called—and he suffered his pride and his prejudices to blind, in this instance, his mighty spirit, and contract his grasp, so that he saw not the all powerful, the humanizing, and civilizing influence of the very bargain-making which he despised. True it is, that as a spirit of speculation or bargain-making contracts itself, and every day becomes more and more a thing of farthings and of fractions, it begets a grovelling spirit of meanness that may eventually end in dishonesty; but as it expands it exalts the man, imbues his mind with liberality, and benefits society. The spirit of commercial speculation will spread abroad until it render useless the sword of the hero, cause it to rust in its scabbard, and to be regarded as the barbarous plaything of antiquity. It will go forth as a dove from the ark of society, bearing the olive-branch of peace and of mutual benefits into all lands, until men shall learn war no more.

But at present I am not writing an essay on speculation or enterprise, but the history of Reuben Purves the speculator;

and I shall therefore begin with it at once. Reuben was born in Galashiels, than which I do not know a more thriving town; or one more beautifully situated on all the wide Borders. As you pass it, seated on the outside of the Chevy-Chase coach on a summer day (if perchance a sunny shower shall have fallen), it lies before you as a long and silvered line, the blue slates reflecting back the sunbeams. In its streets cleanliness and prosperity join hands, while before it and behind it rise hills, high enough to be called mountains, where the gorgeous heather purples in its season. Before it—I might say through it—wimples the Gala, almost laving its thresholds. There the spirit of speculation and of trade has taken up "a local habitation and a name" in the bosom of poetry. On the one hand is the magic of Abbotsford, on the other the memories of Melrose, but its description is best summed up in the condemnation of a Cockney traveller, who said—"Vy, certainly, Galashiels would be wery pretty, were it not its vood and vater."

But I again digress from the history of Reuben Purves. I have said that he was born in Galashiels; his father was a weaver, and the father brought his son up to his own profession. But although Reuben

> "was a wabster guid,
> Could stown a clue wi' ony body,"

his apprenticeship (if his instructions from his father could be called one) was scarce expired, when, like Othello, he found "his occupation gone," and the hand-loom was falling into disuse. Arkwright, who was long considered a mere bee-headed barber, had—though in a great measure by the aid of others—brought his mechanism to a degree of perfection that not only astonished the world, but held out a more inexhaustible and a richer source of wealth to Britain than its mines did to Peru. Deep and bitter were the imprecations of many against the power-loom; for it is difficult for any man to see good in that which dashes away his hard-earned morsel from the mouths of his family, and leaves them calling in vain for food. But there were a few spirits who could appreciate the vast discovery, and who in it perceived not only the benefits it would confer on the country, but on the human race. Arkwright, who, though a wonderful man, was not one of deep or accurate knowledge, with a vanity which in him is

excusable, imagined that he could carry out the results of his improvements to an extent that would enable the country to pay off the national debt. It was a wild idea; but, extravagant as it was, it must be acknowleged, that the fruits of his discoveries enabled Britain to bear up against its burdens, and maintain its faith in times of severest trial and oppression.

Reuben's father was one of those who complained most bitterly against the modern innovation. He said, "the work could never be like a man's work. It was a ridiculous novelty, and would justly end in the ruin of all engaged in it." It had, indeed, not only reduced his wages the one half, but he had not half his wonted employment, and he saw nothing but folly, ruin, and injustice in the speculation. Reuben, however, pondered more deeply; he entered somewhat into the spirit of the projector. He not only entertained the belief that it would enrich the nation, but he cherished the hope that it would enrich himself. How it was to accomplish his own advancement he did not exactly perceive, but he lived in the idea—he dreamed of it—nothing could make him divest himself of it; and he was encouraged by his mother saying—

"Weel, Reuben, I canna tell, things may be as ye say—only there is very little appearance o' them at present, when the wages o' you an' your faither put thegither, are hardly the half o' what ane o' ye could hae made. But ae thing is certain—*they who look for a silk gown, always get a sleeve o't.*"

"Nonsense, woman! ye're as bad as him," was the reply of his father: "wherefore would ye encourage the callant in his havers? I wonder, seeing the distress we are a' brought to, he doesna think shame to speak o' such a thing. Mak a fortune by the new-fangled system, indeed!—my truly! if it continue meikle langer, he winna be able to get brose without butter."

"Weel, faither," was the answer of Reuben, "we'll see; but you must perceive that there is no great improvement can take place, let it be what it will, without doing injury to somebody. And it is our duty to watch every opportunity to make the most of it."

"In my belief, the laddy is out o' his head," rejoined the father; "but want will bring him to his senses."

Reuben, however, soon found that it became almost impossible to keep soul and body together by the labours of the loom. He therefore began to speculate on what he ought to

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do; and, like my honoured namesake, the respectable poet, but immortal ornithologist, he took unto himself a PACK, and, with it upon his shoulders, he resolved to perambulate the Borders. There was no disgrace in the calling, for it is as ancient, perhaps more ancient, than nobility; and we are told that, even in the time of Solomon, "there were chapmen in the land in those days." Therefore, Reuben Purves became a chapman. He, as his original trade might lead one to suppose, was purely a dealer in "*soft*" goods; and when he entered a farm-house, among the bonny buxom girls, he would have flung his pack upon the table, and said—

"Here, now, my braw lasses; look ye here! Here's the real upright, downright, elegant and irresistible muslin for frills, which no sweetheart upon this earth could have the power to withstand. And here's the gown-pieces, cheap, cheap—actually gien them awa—the newest, the most elegant patterns! Only look at them!—it is a sin to see them so cheap! Naething could be mair handsome! Now or never, lasses! Look at the ribbons, too—blue, red, yellow, purple, green, plain, flowered, and gauze. Now is the time for busking your cockernony—naething could withstand them wi' sic faces as yours—naething, naething, and that ye would find. It would be out o' the question to talk o't. Come, hinnies, only observe them, I'm sure ye canna but buy—or look at this lawn."

"O Reuben, man," they would have said, "they are very bonny; but we hae nae siller."

"Havers!" answered he, "young queens like you talking about siller! Sell your hair, dears, and buy lang lawn!"

Then did Reuben pull forth his scissors, and begin to exercise the functions of a hair-dresser, in addition to his calling as a chapman—thinning, and sometimes almost cropping, the fair, the raven, the auburn or the brown tresses of the serving-maids, and giving them his ribbons and his cambrics in exchange for their shorn locks. The ringlets he disposed of to the hair-dressers in Edinburgh, Newcastle, or Carlisle, and he confessed that he found it a very profitable speculation; and where the colour or texture of the hair was beautiful, he invariably preferred bartering for it, to receive payment in money. This was a trait in Reuben's character, at the outset of his career as a speculator, which showed that he had a correct appreciation of the real principles of trade—that he

knew the importance of barter, without which commerce could not exist; and it afforded an indication of the future merchant.

He was in the habit of visiting every town, village, and farm-stead within sixty miles of the Borders—to the north—and to the south—and taking in the entire breadth of the island. His visits became as regular as clock-work. No merchant now-a-days knows more exactly the day and almost the hour when he may expect a visit from the traveller of the house with which he deals, accompanied with an invitation to drink a bottle of wine, and pay his account, than the people in the Border villages knew when Reuben would appear amongst them.

It was shrewdly suspected that Reuben did not confine himself solely to the sale of ribbons, gown-pieces, and such like ware, but that his goodly pack was in fact a magazine, in which was concealed tea, cognac, and tobacco. At all events, he prospered amazingly, and in the course of three years—though he lessened its weight at every village he came to—his pack overgrew his shoulders, and prosperity compelled him, first, to have recourse to a pack-horse, and, before he had had it long, to a covered cart or caravan. In short, on arriving at a village, instead of going round from house to house with his stock upon his shoulders, as he was wont to do, he sent round the drummer or bellman, or, where no such functionaries are known, he employed some other individual, with a key and a trencher, to go round the village and make the proclamation—

"This is to give notice that Mr. Reuben Purves, with his grand and elegant assortment of the newest and most fashionable varieties of soft ware goods, *and other commodities*, all bought by him for ready-money, so that great bargains may be expected, has just arrived (at such an inn), and will remain for this day only; therefore those who wish the real superior articles, at most excellent bargains, will embrace the present opportunity!"

Let not the reader despise Reuben, because he practised and understood the mysteries of puffing. There is nothing done in this world without it. No gardener ever "lichtlied" his own leeks. All men practise it, from the maker of books to the maker of shoe-blacking, or the vendor of matches. From the

grandiloquent advertisement of a metropolitan auctioneer down to the "*only* true and particular account" of an execution, bawled by a flying-stationer on the streets, the spirit of puffing, in its various degrees, is to be found. Therefore we blame not Reuben—he only did what other people did, though, perhaps, after a different fashion, and with better success. It gave a promise of his success as a tradesman. He said he ventured on it as a speculation, and finding it to suit his purpose, he continued it. In truth, scarce had the herald made the proclamation which I have quoted, until Reuben's cart was literally besieged. His customers said, "it went like a cried fair"—"there was nae getting forward to it."

Moreover, he was always civil, he was always obliging. He had a smile, and a pleasant and merry word for every one. Buy or not buy, his courtesy never failed him. In short, he would do anything to oblige his customers, save to give them credit; and that, as he said, was not because he had any doubt of their honesty, or that he was unwilling to serve them, but because he had laid it down as a rule never to trust a single penny, which rule he could not break. He was also possessed of a goodly person, was some five feet ten inches in height, he had fair hair, a ruddy cheerful countenance, intelligent blue eyes, and in years little exceeded thirty.

At this period of Reuben's history, there lived in the town of Moffat, one Miss Priscilla Spottiswoode. Now, Priscilla was a portly, and withal a comely personage, and though rather stout, she was tall in proportion to her stoutness. Nothing could surpass the smoothness of the clear red and white upon her goodly countenance. There was by no means too much red, and constitutional good-nature shed a sort of perpetual smile over her features, like a sunbeam irradiating a tranquil lake. In short, it was a reproach to every bachelor in the town and parish of Moffat, to have permitted forty and four summers to roll over the head of Priscilla, without one amongst them having the manliness to step forward and offer his hand to rescue her from a state of single solitariness. She had been for more than twenty years the maid, or rather I might say, the nurse, of an old and rich lady, who, at her death, bequeathed to her five hundred pounds.

Reuben first saw Priscilla, about three months after she had

received the legacy. "Fife hundred pounds," thought he, "would set a man on his feet." He also gazed on her kind, comely smiling countenance, and he said within himself, that "the men of Moffat were blind." And eventually he concluded, communing with himself, that the fair Priscilla was a speculation worthy the thinking of. She wished to purchase a few yards of lace for cap borders, and such like purposes; and as Reuben sold them to her, he said to her a hundred pleasant things, and he let drop some well-timed and well-turned compliments, and she blushed as his eulogy on the lace aptly ended in praise of her own fair features. Yet this was not all; for he not only sold to her fifty per cent. cheaper than he would have parted with his goods to any other purchaser, but he politely —by what appeared a wilful sort of accident—contrived to give her a full yard into her bargain. Priscilla looked upon Reuben with more than complacency; she acknowledged (that is, to herself) that he was the best-looking, polite, and most sensible young man she had ever seen. She resolved that in future she would deal with no one else: and indeed she had got such an excellent bargain of the lace, that she had come to the determination of again visiting his stock, and making a purchase of other articles. And, added she, to a particular friend—

"It does a body good to buy from him, for he is always so pleasant."

But Reuben saved her the trouble; for early the next day he called at her house with a silk dress under his arm. He said—

"It was the last piece of the kind he had—indeed it was a perfect beauty, equal to real India, and would become her exceedingly—and not to think about the price, for that was no object."

"What then am I to think about?" thought Priscilla; and she admired the silk much, but, peradventure, if the truth were told, she admired its owner more.

Reuben spent more than two hours beneath the roof of the too long-neglected spinster. During those two hours she blushed, his tongue faltered, and when he rose to depart he had neither the silk beneath his arm nor the cash for it in his pocket; but he shook her hand long and fervently, and he would have saluted her fair cheek—but true love, like true genius, people say, is always modest. Priscilla, on being left

alone, felt her heart in a very unusual tumult; and now she examined her face in a mirror. and again admired the silk which he had presented to her. She had always heard him spoken of as a steady, thriving, and deserving young man; and it became a settled point in her mind that, if he directly popped the important question, she would be as candid with him, and at once answer—"*Yes.*"

Reuben was frequently seen in Moffat after this, even when he brought no goods for sale; and within six months after her purchase of the lace, the sacred knot, which no man may unloose, was tied between them; and at the age of forty and four years and four months, but before time had wrought a wrinkle on her fair brow, Miss Priscilla Spottiswoode blushed into Mrs. Purves.

While following his avocation as a chapman, Reuben had accumulated somewhat more than two hundred pounds, which, with the five hundred that his wife brought him, raised his capital to more than seven hundred. But he was not a man to look only at the needle point of things, or whose soul would be lost in a nutshell. Onward! onward! was the ruling principal of Reuben—he had been fortunate in all his speculations, and he trusted to be fortunate still. Never, during all his wanderings, had he lost sight of the important discoveries of Arkwright, and of the improvements which were every day being made upon them; and while he was convinced that they would become a source of inexhaustible wealth to the nation, he still cherished the hope and the belief that they would enrich himself. He said also—and Mrs. Purves agreed with him—that travelling the country was a most uncomfortable life for a married man. He therefore sold his horse and his covered cart, disposed of his stock at prime cost, and, with his wife and capital, removed to Manchester.

He took a room and a cellar, at the top of Dean Street, and near to the foot of Market Street,

"Where merchants most do congregate."

The upper room served them for bedchamber, parlour, kitchen and all, while the cellar he converted into a warcroom. Perhaps, having more than seven hundred pounds to begin the world with, some may think that he might have taken more commodious premises; but rents were becoming high in Man-

chester—many a great merchant has begun business in a cellar —and Reuben, quoting the words of poor Richard, said—

> "Vessels large may venture more,
> But little boats should keep the shore."

And he farther said, "I am but serving my time yet; we must creep before we walk."

Never was any man who prospered in the affairs of this world more diligent in business than Reuben Purves, and in Priscilla he found an admirable helpmate. She soon learned the name, the price, and the quality of every description of goods; and when he was necessarily absent, she could attend to the orders of customers as promptly as himself. The reader unacquainted with the Manchester mode of business, is not to suppose that Reuben, although his stock was wedged up in a cellar, was a retail draper or haberdasher. Its magnitude considered, there are fewer such in Manchester than in any other town in the kingdom; but Reuben commenced as a wholesale merchant—one who supplies the country dealers. He always went to the markets to purchase with the money in his hand, as Joseph the patriarch's brethren came to him to buy corn—and pity it is that the good old custom has too much fallen into disuse. He made his purchases chiefly from the small manufacturers, to whom ready money was an object of importance, and consequently bought his goods to much advantage to himself. During his extensive perambulations on the Borders also, he had become generally acquainted with the drapers in all the towns upon his circuit; and at the seasons when they generally visit Manchester, he might have been seen rapidly passing along what is now called Piccadilly, and passing the coach from the north, just as it drew up to the inn; and if one whose face he knew stepped off it or out of it, Reuben turned suddenly round as if by accident, took the north country purchaser by the hand, and invited him home to "eat beef" with him, or to take supper, as the case might be. He was generally successful; for to resist his solicitations was a matter of difficulty, and after partaking of a frugal meal and a single glass, the stranger was invited to examine the stock in the wareroom, and seldom failed of becoming the purchaser of a part. By such means and perseverance his business in a few years increased exceedingly. He was of

opinion, that there is hardly anything too difficult for resolute perseverance to accomplish or overcome, at least he always found it so; and I confess I am very much of his mind.

Within three years he had taken extensive warerooms. He had a clerk, a salesman, four warehousemen, a traveller, and a porter. He had also taken his father from the loom. Reuben had seized fortune at the flood, and he floated down with the stream. He said he never undertook a speculation, but he was convinced in his own mind it would be successful. He also said, that fortune-making was like courtship; it was never venture never win—only to know what you were venturing upon.

I should have mentioned, that, previous to this, Priscilla had made Reuben the happy father of twin daughters, and the one they named Rachel, the other Elizabeth. The mother gloried in her children, and her husband looked on them with delight. He was a fortunate man and a happy one; and his cup of felicity, if it did not run over, was well filled.

In a short time, Reuben not only supplied with goods to a great extent the merchants on the Borders, but throughout the three kingdoms; and he also exported extensively to other countries, and even to some where the importation of British goods was prohibited.

"A fig for the tariffs," he was wont to say, snapping his fingers; "the profit will cover the risk. The principle of trade is like the principle of steam—there is no restraining it. Neither kings, emperors, congresses, nor laws, are a match for it. They canna cage it up like a bird. They might as well say to the waves of the sea, 'hitherto shalt thou come and no farther,' as to the spirit of trade—'*stop!*'"

In these speculations, however, Reuben frequently experienced the common fate of the smuggler; and the goods which he sent into countries where they were prohibited were seized. He was of too ardent a temperament to be merely the purchaser and vendor of other men's manufactures, and eventually he erected a cotton-mill of his own, a few miles out of Manchester.

And here it will, perhaps, be more acceptable to the reader, that I detail the remainder of Reuben's narrative in his own words, as he related it to an old schoolfellow in his native town, after an absence from it of more than thirty years.

It was delivered with his unchanged Scottish accent, and with many Scottish phrases and modes of expression, which a residence of more than three times ten years in England had not destroyed :—

"I was now," said he—alluding to the erection of the mill—"at what I had always considered as the very pinnacle of my ambition—the proprietor of a cotton-mill, and of one, too, that had cost me several thousands in completing it. I had no manner of doubt, but that it would turn out the master-speculation of my existence ; for bless ye, at that period, to have a mill was to have a mine. A spinning-jenny was worth its weight in rubies. There was Arkwright made a fortune like a nobleman's in a jiffy; and Robert Peel, greatly to his credit, from being a weaver lad, I may say, in less than no time, made a fortune that could have bought up half the gentry in the country. Indeed, wealth just poured in upon the mill-owners; and, I must confess, they werena bad times for the like o' me, that bought their calicoes, and got them dressed and printed to sell them out, as ye may judge from my having been able to erect a mill of my own before I had been many years in business. But, I must confess, that the mill ran between me and my wits. All the time it was building, I was out and in frae the town, to see how the workmen were getting on, wet or dry, and, I dare to say, that if I dreamed about it once, during the twelve months it was in hands, I dreamed about it a thousand times. Many a time Priscilla has said to me—

"'Reuben, I doubt ye are thinking owre meikle about that mill, and really it's no right—it's sinfu'. I fear it is enough to mak the concern no prosper.'

"'My dear,' I used to say, 'do ye consider what an immense speculation it is?—it is like death or life to me, and if I didna think o' it, and look after the workmen to see how they are getting on wi' it, who, do you suppose, would? There is nothing like a man looking after his own concerns, and, where there is sae meikle at stake, it is impossible but to think o't.'

"But, sir, I looked after the progress of the mill, and my thoughts were taken up concerning it, to the neglect of my more immediate business. After commencing in the wholesale line, I found it impossible to abide by my original rule of—no credit ; and, during my frequent absence from my warehouse, my salesman had admitted the names of men into my

books of whom I knew nothing, but whom I afterwards learned were not to be trusted. Their payments were not forthcoming in the proper season; and, in looking after them, I put off insuring the mill at the time I intended. Delay, sir, is a curse to a person in business; it is as dangerous as the blandishments of a harlot to the young—and so I found it. On the very night that the machinery and every thing was completed, I allowed the spinners and others that I had engaged to have a supper and dance in it wi' their wives and sweethearts. I keepit them company for an hour mysel', and very merry they were. But, after charging them all to keep sober and harmonious one with another, and to see that they locked the doors behind them when they broke up, and to leave everything right, I wished them good-night; and they drank my health, and gave me three cheers as I left them. I got into my gig, and drove home to Manchester. But I dinna think I had been three hours in bed, when Priscilla gied me a dunch with her elbow, and, says she—

"'Waken, Reuben! waken!—there's an unco knocking at the street door.'

"'Hoot! it will be some drunk body passing,' says I, and turned round on my side to compose myself to sleep again.

"But the knock, knocking continued louder and louder.

"'That is nae drunk body,' said Priscilla, 'something has happened.'

"I started owre the bed, and I was hardly half-dressed when I heard the street door open, and the servant lass came fleein' up the stair.

"'What is it?' cried I.

"'Oh, sir—the mill!—the mill!' said she.

"Had she shot me, she could not have rendered me more stupified.

"'What about the mill?' cries I, all shaking with agitation.

"'Oh, it's on fire—it's on fire!' replied the lassie.

"I heard Priscilla scream, 'On fire!' and she also sprang to the floor.

"I cannot tell ye how I threw on my coat—I know that I banged out without a napkin about my neck, and, rushing down the stairs, I couldna even stop to get the horse from the stable and saddled, but away I flew upon my feet. If

ever a man ran as if for his life, it was me that night. It was six miles to the mill, but I never slacked for a single moment. I didna even discover, though the stones were cutting my feet, that I had come away without my shoes. The mill absorbed both thought and sense—I was dead to everything else. But, oh, upon reaching it, what a sight presented itself to my view! There was the great red flames roaring and raging up to the height of its five stories; and the very wheels of the machinery, seen through the windows, glowing as bright as when in the hands o' the smith that formed them. The great suffocating clouds of smoke came rolling about me, and even blinding me. Hundreds of women ran about screaming, some carrying water, and some running in the way of others, and drunken men staggered to and fro, like lost spirits in the midst of their tortures. O, sir, it was an awful sight for any one to behold; but for me to witness it was terrible! For some minutes I was bereft of both speech and reason; and, had the spectators not held me back, I would have rushed into the middle of the flames. Crash after crash, the newly-erected walls and the floors fell in, and I was a helpless spectator of the destruction of my own property. In one night, yea, in one hour, more than half the fortune that I had struggled for years to gather together, was swept, as by a whirlwind, from off the face of the earth.

"I stood till I beheld the edifice that had been the pride of my heart, a mass of smoking ruins, with, I may say, scarce one stone left upon another. All the manufacturers round about sympathised with me very sincerely, and one of them drove me back to Manchester in his drosky. When I entered my own house, I believe I appeared like a person on whom sentence of death has been passed, as he is removed from the bar and led back to his prison.

"'Weel, Reuben,' asked Priscilla, in her own calm and gentle way, 'is the damage great?'

"'Oh, my dear!' said I, 'there is nothing left but a heap o' ashes! Nothing! nothing!—we are ruined!'

"'No, no,' replied she as quietly as ever, 'we arena ruined. The back is aye made fit for the burden. The Hand that sent the misfortune (as we think it) upon us will enable us to bear up against it. Now, just ye compose yersel' and dinna be

angry at what I am gaun to say; but we are just as rich now as we were three years ago; and, I am sure, Reuben, we were quite as happy then as we are now. Ye have still a very excellent business, and a fortune far beyond onything that you and I could ever expect to possess when we cam thegither. You have your health and I have mine; and our twa bits o' bairnies are growing up to be a comfort to us baith. They will ne'er feel the loss o' the cotton mill, and you and I ne'er kenned the guid o't. Wherefore, then, should ye grieve? Ye ought rather to be thankfu' that it is nane o' your family that is taen frae ye. And, I have nae doubt, that, although we self-wise and short-sighted mortals canna see it, this visitation will be for the guid o' us a'. It is better that ye should lose the mill than forget your Maker; and, forgie me for saying it, but I feared it was setting your heart upon the things o' this world, to a degree which did not become the faither o' a Christian family. Therefore, let me entreat you to say, 'His will be done,' and to believe that this has fallen upon you for the best. Our loss is not so great but that, if times keep good, we may soon owercome it."

"I had often experienced the value of my wife, and admired her meek, patient spirit, and affectionate heart; but I never, until this trial came upon me, knew her real worth. She enabled me to begin the world; ay, sir, and this far she has guided me through it. She was better than twelve years older than me—but what of that? She looked as young like at forty as ever I saw another woman do at twenty; and now, when she has been my wife for thirty years, I hardly ken her aulder. A glaikit lassie under such circumstances might have wrung her hands, and upbraided me for allowing the supper and the dance; but Priscilla strove only to comfort me, to imbue my mind with fortitude, and to turn the accident to my eternal advantage. I had long loved and esteemed her, but I now reverenced her.

"I sat and I listened to her, and looked in her face for the space of ten minutes, without speaking a word; and at last, fairly overpowered wi' her gentleness and her tenderness, I rose and took her hand; and 'Priscilla,' says I, 'for your sake dear, I will think no more about the matter. The mill is destroyed; but, as you say, we may overcome the loss—and I shall try.'

"Though I have as keen feelings as onybody, I was not a person to sit down long, and croon and shake my head over misfortunes that couldna be helped. I might be driven back from an object, and defeated in accomplishing it; but it would be necessary to take my life before I could be made to relinquish my attempts, or to conquer me. Perseverance, and a restless ambitious spirit of enterprise, spurred me on.

"I endeavoured to extend my business more widely than ever, and, as I had sometimes had losses with houses on the Continent, I resolved to visit France, and Germany, and other places myself, and see in what situation the land lay. I did so; and in Holland and Switzerland, in particular, I entered into what proved some very profitable speculations. Now, sir, it is my conviction, that where there is no speculation, there can be no luck. As well might a man with his hands in his pockets expect a guinea to drop into them. People who, perhaps, have been born with a silver spoon in their mouths, or had enough to purchase them a hot joint every day, thrust upon them by accident, will tell you, in speaking of any particular subject—'Oh, I will have nothing to do with it—it is only a speculation.' Now, sir, but for some speculation that had been entered into before they were, the one would have neither had the silver spoon in his teeth, nor the other the hot joint. Without speculation, commerce could not exist. In the community where its spirit is not felt, they must be dull as horses in a ring moving round and as regularly and as monotonously as the wheels of a machine, to procure the every-day bread and cheese of existence. I have been a speculator all my life—I am a speculator still. Neither you nor I have time for me to enter into the particulars of thirty years' enterprises. It is true I have lost by some, but in more I have been successful, or until this day I would have been a hand-loom weaver in this my native town of Galashiels.

"But, sir, within three years, I had built another mill. I commenced manufacturer, and prospered; and in a short time I began the business of a printer also. You understand me—it is a calico-printer I mean, not a book or newspaper printer; for if, in a town in Lancashire, you ask for a printer, nobody would think of showing you to a consumer of ink and paper.

"Our two daughters had been educated at a boarding school in Yorkshire; but they were now come home, and were, I may

say, women grown, for they were eighteen; and, although I say it, that, perhaps, ought not to say it, remarkably fine-looking young women they were. People said that Elizabeth was a perfect picture; though, so far as I could judge, Rachel was the bonniest of the two; but they were remarkably like each other. There, however, was this difference between them—Rachel was of a sedate and serious disposition, and very plain in her dress, even plainer, sometimes, than I wished to see her; but she was always so neat, that she set whatever she put on. Elizabeth, on the other hand, though a kind-hearted lassie, was more thoughtless, and more given to the vanities of this world. When her sister was at her books, she was at her looking-glass. She was as fond of dress as Rachel was the reverse. I have often said to her—

"'O Bessy! Bessy!—dress will turn your head some day or other. Ye will frighten ony man from having ye.'

"'Don't be afraid of that, father, she replied, laughing, for there was no putting her out of temper, (she was like her mother in that); 'there is no danger, and it is time enough yet.'

"She was excessively fond of amusements, such as balls, concerts, plays, and parties; much fonder, indeed, than it was agreeable for me or her mother to observe. And we frequently expostulated with her; for, though we did not wish to debar her entirely from such amusements, yet there is a medium to be observed in all things, and we did not like to see her going beyond that medium.

"Well, sir, she had been at a party one night in Mosley Street, and a young gentleman, who, I afterwards understood, had shown her a great deal of attention throughout the evening, saw her home. There was no harm in this; but he called again the next day, and, as I shortly after learned, every day.

"So, when I heard this, I thought it was right and proper that I should see him, and learn who and what he was. I accordingly stopped at home a forenoon for the express purpose, but not much, as I easily observed, to the satisfaction of Elizabeth. About eleven o'clock, the gentleman came as usual. I easily saw that he was rather taken aback on perceiving me; but he recovered his self-possession as quick as the eyelids can twinkle, and perfectly confused me with his superabundance of bows and scrapes. I did not like his ap-

pearance. He was dressed like a perfect fop. He wore silk stockings, and his feet were wedged into bits of French-soled pumps, which, to my eye, made it perfectly painful to look on them. He had on a light-green, very fine, and very fashionable coat and trousers, with a pure white waistcoat, and a ribbon about his neck. He also carried a cane with an image on the head o't; and he had a great bunch of black curls on each side of his head, which, I verily believe, were pomatumed, brushed, and frizzled.

"'I must put an end to your visits, billy,' thinks I, before ever he opened his lips.

"He was what some ladies would call—'a most agreeable young man.' In fact, I heard one (not my daughter) pronounce him to be 'a prodigious fine gentleman!' 'Prodigious!' thought I, when I heard it. He had a great flow of speech and spirits, and could run over all the scandal of the town with a flippancy that disgusted me, but delighted many. He could also talk like a critic about dancers, singers, actors, and race horses, and discuss the fashions like a milliner. All this I ascertained during the half hour I was in his company. He also gabbled French and Italian, and played upon a thing like a sort of bass fiddle without a bow, that they call a guitar. I at once set him down in my own mind for a mere fortune hunter. He was a shallow puppy; he carried all on the outside of his head, and nothing within it. I found he knew no more about business than the man in the moon. But he pretended to be the son of an Honourable, and carried cards with the words, '*Charles Austin, Esq.*,' engraved upon them. He was above belonging to any profession—he was a gentleman at large.

"Disgusted as I was with him, I had not the face to rise and say to him—'Sir, I will thank you to go out of my house, and not enter it again.' And from the manner in which I had been brought up, I had not the manner of what is called —bowing a person to the door. But what vexed me most while he remained, was to observe that even Priscilla sometimes laughed at the silly things he said, which, as I afterwards told her, was just encouraging him. When he left the house, I turned to Elizabeth, and—

"'Noo, Betty, hinny,' says I, 'tak my advice, as yer faither and yer freend, and ne'er speak to that young man again,

nor alloo him to keep ye company; for, as sure as my name is Reuben, there is something essentially bad aboot him.'

"She hung her head, and there was a tear in her e'e, and, I think for the first time ever I had observed it in my days, she looked rather sulky; but I could get no satisfaction from her.

"I think it was between two and three months after this—during which time I had seen and heard no more of the fashionable Charles Austin—that, having business to transact in Liverpool, I took Priscilla down with me in the gig, for the benefit of her health. It was in the summer season, and eleven o'clock had chimed from the steeple of the collegiate church before we returned at night. But never, never shall I forget our miserable home-coming. There was our poor Rachel, sitting by herself, wringing her hands, and the tears running down her bonny cheeks.

"'Rachel! dear Rachel! what is the matter, love?' cried her mother and myself at the same instant.

"'O Elizabeth!—Elizabeth is away!' sobbed my poor bairn.

"Priscilla was stupified, and she repeated the word 'Away!' but the truth broke over me in a moment; and I sank back into a chair, as helpless, for all the world, as a new-born infant.

"Rachel tried to compose herself the best way she could; and she informed us, that her sister had left the house about ten o'clock in the forenoon, and that she had not since returned. She also mentioned, that Elizabeth had been seen in the company of Charles Austin shortly after leaving the house; and that, when she did not return in the course of the day, suspecting that they had fled to Gretna, she had sent my principal clerk, Thomas Galloway, after them, in a chaise and four, to bring back Elizabeth.

"Distressed as I was, I admired the presence of mind which Rachel had exhibited. She had done all that I could have done myself, had I been at home; and a fitter person than Thomas Galloway could not have been sent. His zeal, honesty, and industry, had long rendered him a favourite with me; and, though he was but a young man, I treated him more as an equal than a clerk. Nor had I any doubt but in the mission he was sent upon, he would show as much courage, if such an article were required, as he had at all times shown zeal and prudence in my service.

"But Thomas returned. He had heard nothing of them on

the road, and they had not been at Gretna. These tidings threw us all into deeper affliction; and a week passed, and we could hear nothing of my daughter, and our misery increased. But, on the ninth day after her disappearance, a letter arrived from her. It was dated *Coldstream.* My fears read its contents before it was opened. In it she poured forth a rhapsody in praise of her 'dear Charles,' as she termed him, and said if we knew his virtues as well as she knew them, we would love him as she did. She begged forgiveness for the step she had taken, and sought permission to return with her husband, and receive mine and her mother's blessing. She concluded the letter by signing herself our 'affectionate and dutiful daughter, *Elizabeth Austin.*'

"'*Dutiful!*—the ungrateful, the silly gipsy!' cried I, flinging down the letter, and trampling it under my feet in pure madness; 'she shall never inherit a penny of mine—she shall never enter my door. She is ruined—she has married worthlessness and misery!'

"It was some time before Priscilla said anything; but I saw she was very greatly affected. At last, the mother's love for her offspring got the better of every other consideration in her heart, and she endeavoured to soothe me, and to prevail on me to forgive Elizabeth, and to see her again.

"I had intended that the marriage portion of my daughters, on the very day they became wives, should be ten thousand each, providing that I approved of the match—though I by no manner of means wished or intended to direct their choice, or control their affections, further than it was my duty as a parent to see that they did not throw themselves away. But I was perfectly persuaded that, to give ten thousand, or the half of it, or any sum, to such a person as Elizabeth had got, would be no better than to fling it into the fire.

"However, the entreaties and persuasion of Priscilla prevailed. I consented that Elizabeth should return, and gave her husband five thousand pounds as her dowry, with a promise of more, if they should conduct themselves to my satisfaction. He had not received the money many days when they set out for London.

"Some time previous to this, I thought I had observed a sort of particular kindness between my daughter Rachel and my clerk, Thomas Galloway, of whom I have already spoken,

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and to whose worth I have borne testimony. He was a native of Newton-Stewart, and a young man of humble parentage, like myself; but I liked him nothing the worse upon that account; for, in my opinion, there is no real respectability, save that only which a man purchases through his own merits. Now, I once or twice, when I went out to enjoy the air in the summer nights, after business hours, perceived Rachel and Thomas oxtering together along the green lanes, behind a place in the suburbs that is called Strangeways. Such was the high opinion that I had of him, that I was determined, if there was anything between them, to offer no obstacle in the world to their marriage. I considered that a character, a disposition, and a knowledge of business, such as Thomas had, were far before riches. But I knew that, in certain respects, both of the two were such bashful creatures that neither of them would dare to mention the matter to me. So, after their familiarity became every day more apparent, though they tried to hide it, and when at different times I had tried humorously to sound both of them in vain, I mentioned the subject to Priscilla. I found that she had perceived it long before me; for women have quick eyes in such matters. But she said that Rachel was such a strange, reserved lassie, that, though her own bairn, she could not speak to her with a mother's freedom; though, now that she had heard my mind concerning the match, she would ask Rachel how matters stood between her and Thomas Galloway that very day.

"She, therefore, went into the room where Rachel was sitting sewing, and, after talking about various matters, by way of not just breaking the matter at once, she said—

"'Rachel, dear, are ye aware if your faither has ever made ony sort o' recompense to Thomas Galloway for his trouble in gaun a' the way to Gretna after Elizabeth, when the foolish lassie ran away wi' young Mr. Austin?'

"'I do not think it,' replied Rachel.

"'Then,' said her mother, 'he has not done what he ought to have done. Indeed, I think he would only be doing his duty if he were to do something for Thomas; for he is a fine, genteel, deserving lad. Do ye not think so, dear?

"This was a home-thrust which our bit lassie was not prepared for, and it brought the vermilion to her cheeks. But,

after a moment's hesitation, she said, though not without a manifest degree of confusion—

"'Yes, I think him a very deserving lad.'

"But her mother had made the first step, and she was not to be put back, and therefore, she continued—

"'He is a lad that will rise in the world yet, and he weel deserves it; for a kinder, or more prudent, and obliging young man, I never saw—and I am glad, hinny, that ye hae the good sense to think weel o' him."

"'Mother!' said Rachel, and her confusion greatly increased.

"'Come, love,' continued Priscilla, 'ye needna blush or conceal onything frae yer mother. She is a bad mother, indeed, that a daughter daurna trust wi' a virtuous secret; and I hope ye ne'er saw onything in me, Rachel, that need debar ye frae making yer feelings known to me. Dinna suppose, love, that I am sae short-sighted but that I hae observed the tender affection that has long been springing up between ye; and I have not only observed it, but I hae dune sae wi' satisfaction and pleasure, for I know not a young man that I could have more credit by in calling him son-in-law. So look up, dear, and tell me at once, am I not right—would ye not prefer Thomas to any man ye have ever seen, for your husband?" And she kindly took our daughter by the hand.

"'*Yes*, mother!' faltered my sweet, blushing blossom; and she sank her head on her mother's breast.

"'That is right, hinny,' said her mother; 'but ye micht hae tauld me before, and it would hae saved ye baith mony a weary hour o' uneasiness, I hae nae doot. But ye shall find nae obstacles in yer way, for it is a match that will gie baith yer faither and me great satisfaction. He has observed the attentions o' Thomas to ye as weel as mysel', and spoke to me concerning it this very hour. Indeed, I may just tell ye that he desired me to mention the subject to ye; and if I found that yer feelings were as we supposed, that the marriage should immediately take place. And he will also take Thomas into partnership.'

"Rachel, poor thing, grat with joy when her mother told her what I had said; and when Thomas heard of it he could have flung himself at my feet. The upshot was, that in a few weeks they were married, and I took Thomas into partnership with me, which took a great burden off my shoulders;

and, more particularly, as I had recently entered into a canal speculation, and become one of the principal shareholders and directors of the company.

"For twelve months from the time that Elizabeth went to London, we had but two letters from her; and one of them was abusing her sister for what she termed her 'grovelling spirit,' in marrying her father's clerk, and bringing disgrace upon the family. When I saw the letter, my answer back to her was—

"'Elizabeth, my woman, do not forget yourself. Your sister has married a deserving lad, and your mother married a packman!'

"As to her husband, I never, in my born days, had a scribe from his pen. But I heard, from people that had business in London, that they were flinging away the money I had given them with both hands; and that Elizabeth, so far from being a check upon her husband's extravagance, thoughtlessly whirled round with him in the vortex of fashionable dissipation.

"The third letter we received from her was written about fourteen months after her marriage. It was in a strain of the wildest agony. In one line, she implored to have her full dowry bestowed upon her, and in the next she demanded it—and again she entreated me to release her 'dear Charles,' who, as she termed it, had been imprisoned for the paltry sum of five hundred pounds. I saw plainly that to do any thing for them would be money thrown away, and only encouraging them in their ridiculous, not to say wicked, course of fashion and folly. Therefore, in a way, I had made up my mind to let them feel what distress was, so that they might come to some kind of an understanding of the value and the use of money, which it was clear as the sun at noonday that neither the one nor the other of them had. But Priscilla was dreadfully distressed; I never had seen anything put her so much about. We held a sort of family parliament, consisting of my wife and myself, Rachel and her husband, to consider what was best to be done. Rachel, poor thing, pled hard for her sister, which I was pleased to see, though I said nothing; and Thomas suggested that I should release Charles Austin from prison, and give Elizabeth two hundred pounds for their immediate wants, and that I would set up her husband in

whatever line of business he might prefer; but that I neither could nor should keep them in idleness and extravagance. This advice was agreed to. I released my hopeful son-in-law from prison, and sent two hundred pounds to my daughter, with a long letter of admonition, entreaty, and advice.

"We heard no more of them for six months; and I wrote to Elizabeth again, and her mother wrote, and so did Rachel; but we all wrote in vain—our letters were never noticed. But there was one morning that my son, Thomas Galloway, came into the palour where I was sitting, with an open letter in his hand, and his face was like the face of death. A trembling seized me all over. I was glad that there was no person beside me, for I saw that something had happened."

"'Thomas!' cried I, as I saw the letter shake in his hand, 'is my bairn dead?'

"'No,' said he, 'but'—— and he stood still and handed me the letter.

"I just glanced my eyes on it, and it fell out of my hand. It showed us that a forgery had been committed upon our house to the extent of ten thousand pounds!—and, oh, horrible!—by our own worthless son-in-law, Charles Austin! It was a dreadful trial—I knew not how to act. If I permitted the villain to escape unpunished, I was doing an injustice to society; and, oh, on the other hand, how was it possible that I could send to the gallows the husband of my own bairn! Thomas posted off instantly to London, to see what could be done; and I broke the bitter tidings in the best manner I could to Rachel and her mother. Their distress was even greater than mine. Thomas returned in a few days, and brought us word that the villain had escaped abroad somewhere, but where he could not learn; and it was supposed he had taken his wife and child with him—for they had an infant about eight months old."

"It was not the loss of the money, nor even the manner in which it had been lost, that chiefly affected me, but the loss, the ruin, the disgrace of my bairn. Indeed it made such an impression upon me, that I never was the same man afterwards in any business transaction. Therefore, about twelve months after this melancholy event, I purchased a property in Dumfriesshire, and Priscilla and myself went to reside upon

it. I entrusted the entire business to the prudence and experience of Thomas Galloway, and became merely a sleeping partner in the firm.

"We had been better than a year in our house in Dumfriesshire—it was about the Christmas time, and Thomas and Rachel were down seeing us, with their little son, who was just beginning to run about and climb upon our knees. It was a remarkable cold and gousty night, and a poor wandering woman came to our door, with a bairn at her breast, and another on her back, and begging a morsel, and a shelter for herself and infants. We were all sitting round the fire, when one of the servants came up and told us concerning her, asking if they might give her a seat by the fire. I never liked to harbour beggars, and, says I—

"'No: there is a shilling for her: gie her some broken meat, and tell her to go down to the village—it is only two miles.'

"'And give her this from me,' said Rachel; and Priscilla had her hand in her pocket, when the lass added—

"'Poor creature! I dinna believe she is able to crawl as far as the village, for baith her and her infants seem starving to death.'

"'What like is she?' asked Rachel.

"'A bonny young creature, ma'am,' answered our servant, 'but sair, sair dejected.'

"'She had better be brought in, father,' said my daughter.

"'Take her into the kitchen, and let her warm herself and her bairns by the fire,' said Priscilla. And the lass went away down stairs and brought her in.

"Well, in the course of half an hour, Rachel went down to the kitchen, to see if there was anything that she could do for the poor woman and her infants—anything that they stood in need of, like—such as a gown, a frock, a pair of shoes, or the like of those things. But the sound of her light footsteps was hardly off the stairs, when we heard a scream, and the exclamations—

"'Sister! sister!'

"I started to my feet—we all started to our feet; and Priscilla, and Thomas, and myself looked for a moment at each other, in an agony of wonder. We hurried down to the kitchen, and there was my Rachel weeping on the bosom of the poor

wandering woman—my lost, my ruined Elizabeth! She sobbed as though her heart would burst, and would have fallen down and embraced our knees; but her mother pressed her to her bosom, and cried—'My bairn! my bairn!'

"I took her hand, and bursting into tears could only sob—'My poor Betsy!'—and I felt her heart throb, throbbing, as she pressed my hand to her breast.

"Rachel again flung her arms around her neck, and took her and her little ones from the kitchen, to clothe them with her own apparel and that of her child. Poor Priscilla could do nothing but weep; and, when Rachel had clothed her, and cast aside the rags that covered her, she brought her into the parlour, where we sat waiting for them; and her mother and myself again rose and kissed her cheek, and bade her welcome. Throughout the evening she sat sobbing and weeping with her face towards the ground, and could not be comforted. We were not in a state of feeling to ask her questions, nor her to answer them.

"But in a few days, she voluntarily unbosomed her griefs to her sister, who communicated to me her tale of woe. It was evident that she knew nothing of the crime which her husband had committed, and we agreed that she should never know, as it would only add a heavier load to her broken spirit. All she knew was, that he hastened with her to America, where he had changed his name, in consequence, as he said, of a property that had fallen to him in that country. He had long treated her with coolness and neglect, and prohibited her from writing to us, using threats that made her tremble for her life, if she attempted to do so. But on arriving in America, his indifference gave place to open brutality; and in a few months, he basely deserted her and her infants in a strange land. She sold the few trinkets and articles of apparel he had left her; and, with her children in her arms, fainting and broken-hearted, slowly performed a journey of several hundred miles, to the nearest seaport, where, after waiting for some months, doling out the little money she had left, to procure food for her children, she, at length, found a vessel about to sail for Greenock; and her passage-money deprived her of her last coin. My poor bairn had been landed in Scotland without a penny in her pocket, and was begging her way to Manchester, to throw herself at our feet, when Providence directed her to our door

"Never do I think of sufferings which my bairn must at this period have endured, but my heart melts within me, and I think what must have been the tortures of her proud spirit before she could seek assistance from the cold and measured hand of charity. Oh, what a struggle there must have been in her gentle bosom, between the agonies of hunger, the feelings of the mother, and the shame that burned upon her face, and deprived her of utterance!—and while her bits of bairnies clung to her neck, or pulled at her tattered gown, and cried —'Bread, mother, give us bread,' while her own heart was fainting within her, how dreadful must have been the sufferings that my poor Betsy endured. The idea that she was perishing, and begging like a wretched outcast from door to door, while we were faring sumptuously every day, brings the tears to my eyes even to the Power that in mercy directed her steps to her father's house.

"From that day, she and her children have never left my roof; and she shall still share equally with Rachel. About six months ago, I received a double letter from America. The outer one was from a clergyman, and that which was enclosed, bore the signature of *Charles Austin.* It was his confession on his deathbed, begging my forgiveness, and the forgiveness of his wife—my poor injured Elizabeth—for the wrongs and cruelties he had committed against her; and declaring that she was ignorant and innocent of the crime he had committed against me. He also beseeched me to provide for his children, for their mother's sake, if they yet lived. It was the letter of a dying penitent. Four thousand of the sum with which he had absconded, he had not squandered, and it he had directed to be restored to me. The letter from the clergyman announced the death and burial of the unhappy young man, and that he had been appointed to carry his dying requests into effect.

"I communicated the tidings of his death, and his repentance of his conduct towards her; and she received them meekly, but wept, as the remembrance of young affection touched her heart.

"Such, sir, is an account of my speculations, and the losses and crosses with which they have been attended. But success and happiness have predominated; and I must say that I am happier now than ever. And, at the season when Rachel

and Thomas come down to see us, with the bairns, and they run romping about with Elizabeth's, who are two interesting creatures, and three or four will be crying at once, 'Granny this, and Granny that,' I believe that there is not a happier auld woman in Britain than my Priscilla, who first enabled me to speculate to some purpose."

THE ONE-ARMED TAR.

OLD Tom Moffat was the finest fragment of a jolly, good-natured, fearless seaman, that I ever met with. I say a fragment of a man, for he was *minus* his right arm. It was pleasant to look upon his merry old face, and to see his flaxen locks descending over his brow in sea-made ringlets, for, though he was turned threescore, there was not a grey hair upon his head. He appeared like an image of contentment, that envious mortals had deprived of an arm, and left him laughing at their malignity. But, above all—though Tom was neither given to the throwing of the hatchet, nor the spinning of long yarns—it was delightful, when he was about half-a-sheet in the wind. to hear him relate a few scraps of his history.

"Ay! ay!" he would say, "I have been in some rum scenes and encountered some rough squalls in my time—but no matter; I am now sailing-master Moffat, with five and sixpence a-day—and no mistake; and a pension for the loss of my fin into the bargain. I am as comfortable and happy as any two-handed man in the three kingdoms. But, if you wish to know my history, all that's worth telling of't is soon told. I was born in Hexham. My mother was a naval officer's widow, and her father a clergyman. I say she was a widow, because my father died before I was born. I had a sister, but I do not remember her; and I was brought up by my mother beneath the roof of her father. He was a good but severe old man, and I tried to like him, but I could not, for I shook as I heard him cry—'Thomas.' He gave me a good education, and wished to make a parson of me, though I don't think I was any more parson-like then than I am now, and that's not much, I take it. The old man didn't belong to the Church—he was a Dissenter; and he persevered

in his determination of making me a preacher. Therefore, when I was about sixteen, he called me into his study, and informed me that he intended sending me to Edinburgh to attend the classes. He even spoke of my succeeding to the pulpit which he occupied; and he spoke till he brought the salt water into my eyes, and almost upon my cheeks, of living to see me preach in it. I had no ambition for the honours which he seemed to have in store for me. However, as he was rather too strict a disciplinarian for me, I offered no objections to his plan of sending me to Edinburgh. I thought it would free me from the restraint under which he kept me, and that was all I knew about the matter; though, like an ungrateful dog as I was, I did not thank the old man as I ought to have done.

"Now my grandfather had a watch—it was not a gold one, but it was a very excellent silver one, and it had a gold chain and seals attached to it—it had been presented to him as a token of respect on the day of his ordination, by a family in which he had been for six years tutor and chaplain. And, on the day of my departure, when I had kissed my mother's cheek and felt her lips upon mine—for I loved her as I did my own soul, and she deserved it all—the old man took my hand, and he pulled the watch from his fob, and he put it into my hand, chains, seals, and all, and—

"'Take this, Thomas,' said he, 'for your grandfather's sake; and as often as ye look at it, remember that time is precious—spend it not in vain.'

"If ever I loved the old man before, I believe that I loved him then. For presents are excellent temporary openers of the heart, either of man or woman. If your sweetheart be shy, 'tis wonderful how a present will mollify her—but it is not the real thing; and her seeming affection, so produced, won't stand the test, or be of long duration. I have been a sailor, and foolish enough in my day, but I tell you, if you wish a girl to love you sincerely and truly, never attempt to win her heart by the offer of bribes. Give a heart for a heart, and nothing more, till you have her hand too, and then give as much as you like.

"But as I was telling you, I set out for Edinburgh with my grandfather's watch in my pocket, and I pulled it out, either to see the hour, or admire my property, during every half-

hour on the journey. And I believe, though I did shed tears when he gave it, that, before I was half way to Edinburgh, I had forgot the giver of the gift. However, the first session passed on tolerably enough. I was not kept upon short allowance; but, though I did not want for victuals, I had not a sixpence of pocket-money, and I felt this the more, because I thought that some of my fellow students perceived my circumstances, and despised me on account of them.

"I returned home honoured with a prize, and received the caresses of my mother, and the congratulations of my grandfather. The old man predicted bright days for me—already, in imagination, he beheld me in the pulpit which he had occupied for thirty years.

"But, with his first session, ended the prudence of Tom Moffat, and his grandfather's hopes. About the end of the second, a circumstance occurred which put a stop to my studies for twelve months, if not for ever. The people with whom I had lodged during the first year, were about to emigrate to America. Their name was Lindsay, and they had a daughter called Margaret, a beautiful girl of seventeen. I never saw her but my blood ran at the rate of ten knots. During my second session, we used to walk in the Meadows, or around Duddingstone Loch together, and I forsook the study of Greek and of Latin, to study the words that fell from the lips of Margaret Lindsay. But, as I was saying, they were about to emigrate to America, and I accompanied them to Leith, and went on board the vessel with them. It was night when they sailed. Margaret and I were sitting in a corner below, away from her parents and the rest of the passengers, unseen, and talking words of tenderness together. She promised never to forget me—I never to forget her. I intended to accompany her out into the Firth, and to return on shore with the pilot. But we knew not how time moved on. We were loath to part, and I noted not that the vessel was under weigh. In truth, I had never been on board of one before. But, lo! her parents called upon Margaret, and there sat she with my hand across her shoulders—and the vessel not only beyond Leith Roads, but out of the Firth! There was I, a penniless and involuntary passenger across the Atlantic. It was a glorious situation for a student to be placed in! But the idea of enjoying Margaret's company reconciled me to it. My mind was made up at once,

and I went to the commander of the vessel and offered to make myself useful during the voyage. He agreed to the proposal, and I began to take my first lessons in seamanship.

"We arrived at Quebec, and, after accompanying the girl I loved for more than three thousand miles, it was hard to part from her, and I wished to go up the country with her father. But he would not hear of the scheme. He said that I must go back to my friends; and the master, having found me of service on my passage out, told me that he considered himself accountable for me, and that he must take me back to Leith.

"I will not bother you with an account of my parting with Margaret, nor of her distress, poor thing. More than forty years have passed, and I never think of it without feeling, I can't tell how, until this day. Neither will I tell you about our passage home—there was nothing particular in it. My mother received me as if I had risen from the dead—her joy was unbounded—she hung upon my neck and wept for hours; and, though I did not escape several lectures from my grandfather, he was not so severe upon me as I anticipated. But I said nothing to either him or my mother of Margaret Lindsay.

"Such was my second session; and my third and last was more unfortunate. As I was now becoming a lad, my grandfather became more liberal, and he allowed me a shilling a week for pocket money. But, during the very first month of the session, a fellow student advised me to accompany him to the theatre. I had never been in one; and, besides the amusement, he said we should receive a lesson in elocution. I needed but little persuasion to accompany him, and we went to the pit together. Two young ladies took their seats beside us. They were wondrous affable; and one of them was almost as beautiful as Margaret Lindsay. I sometimes thought they were too affable; but then they were polite—very polite—and they smiled so sweetly, and thanked me so kindly for every answer I was able to give to their inquiries, that I could not think evil of them. They wished us good night at the door of the theatre, and my friend and I proceeded to our lodgings. But, as we were passing along the South Bridge—

"'Moffat,' says he to me, 'what's the clock?'

"I put my hand to my watch pocket, but neither seals nor watch was there. I remembered having had it in my hand, be-

tween the play and the farce, in the theatre. I thought I should have fallen dead upon the street. A blindness came over my eyes. I heard the voice of my grandfather crying in my ears—'Thomas! Thomas! reprobate! reprobate!'

"We gave information to the watchmen at the police office and at the houses where such articles are received. But *presto!*—my grandfather's watch, chain, and seals were gone. They had vanished like a rainbow, and were nowhere to be found. Every succeeding day of the session was one of agony and reproach. I learned no more. If I opened a page, imagination heard the ticking of my grandfather's watch, and it ticked in my ears eternally; or, as I strove to read, I put down my finger and thumb mechanically, to fumble with the chain and the seals, and they rubbed against each other, and I started and cried—'What shall I do for the watch?'

"With a heavy and foreboding heart, and a countenance that bespoke disaster, I returned to Hexham. My welcome was beyond my deserving; but supper-time came, and my grandfather, my mother, and myself, sat in his little parlour.

"'What o'clock is it, Thomas, dear?' said she kindly.

"Had she driven a knife to my heart, I would have taken it as kind. I faltered—I ventured a reply. My grandfather observed my hesitation, and he inquired—'Where is your watch, *sir*—the watch which I gave you?' He laid particular emphasis on the latter part of his question—my confusion increased, and I stammered out some excuse about its being in my chest, I believed. 'You believe no such thing, sir,' said my grandfather, sternly; 'go bring it instantly.' I saw the storm gathering on his brow. I perceived that he not only suspected the truth, but believed me more guilty than I was. I left the room as if to go to my own apartment for the watch; but, scarce knowing what I did, I left the house by the garden door, and took the road towards Newcastle. Before I had proceeded a mile, my resolution was taken to go to sea.

"I reached Newcastle before the inhabitants were astir. You may suppose that my experience in the manual duties of a seaman were not great, being merely what I acquired in a trip across the Atlantic and back again. But I had a love for the sea, and had learned readily. I knew that the clothes which I wore were not likely to procure me a berth, and I

resolved, as soon as the shops should open, to offer them to a secondhand dealer, in exchange for the garb of a sailor.

"About seven o'clock I was wandering along what is called the Close, on the look-out for a shop where I should be likely to get an exchange of rigging, when, seeing a street of almost perpendicular stairs, on each side of which were dealers in old clothes, shoes, and such like, I ascended it saying to myself—'This is my shop.' I entered one of the cells, shops, or call them what you like, the proprietress of which had already been at her morning libations. She received me with a low curtsey, and as sweet a smile as her deep rosy face was capable of expressing. On making known my proposal, the smile vanished from her face quicker than the sun is hidden by a cloud in a hurricane. She surveyed me from head to foot, as a sergeant would examine a recruit, and turning me unceremoniously round, inquired—'And how much wilt thou gie me t' boot?'

"Her whole stock of old clothes, shoes, marine stores, and other *et ceteras*, were not worth five pounds, while my coat alone had cost three, not three weeks before.

"'Nothing,' replied I.

"'Nothing! thou scoomy robber o' the dead!' cried my fair dealer in second-hand garments. 'Dost think I steal my gudes? Nothing!—Be off!' I was retiring from the tempest, when she grasped me by the tails of the coat, adding—'Coom back; let me syee what I can de wi' thee.'

"She then spread out a patched blue Jacket, an old Guernsey frock, and a pair of canvas trousers.

"'Now, these will fit ye t' a tee,' continued she, 'or I'm a Dutchman! But, upon my word, thou shud gie me summut t' boot, my canny lad.

"The wide aperture serving for a window, was without frame or glass, and the folding-door was so hung around with the principal stock of the shop, and barricaded with boots, shoes, and such like, that it could not be shut till night; and, on my inquiring for an apartment to change my dress—

"'Jemmy Johnson!' exclaimed she, bursting into laughter, 'that's a gud un!—where did ye get yur modesty? Did ye steal the claes, that ye are afraid to be seen? My fyeth! I dinna knaw but the constables may be here for them before

night yet! I had better mind what I'm deein', else I'll lose baith gudes and character.'

"Making a virtue of necessity, I equipped myself as quickly as possible; and, with a hurried step, hastened to the quay, Without stopping, I proceeded to North Shields, where I went on board a collier, and inquired for the Skipper. I was directed down to the cabin, and there I found sitting a jolly, fear-nothing, merry little fellow, penning a love epistle to his owner's daughter. On applying to him for a berth—

"'Why, I don't know but I may gie thee one,' said he; 'thou's a gud looking young chap, like mysel'. Was ye ever in the coal trade afore?' 'No,' answered I. 'I might hae seen that by the whiteness o' thy hands,' said he. 'Where did ye sar your time?'

"I told him I had been in the American trade.

"'Well,' continued he, 'I canna engage ye by the run, but by the month; and I'se no gaun to ask ye if ye can hand, reef, and steer, and splice a rope, and them land-lubberish sort o' questions; but only, I maun tell ye, when ye are at the helm, if the watch sing out, "Ship-a-head!" dinna ye mind a pin; but, if the other doesn't ship about, run right athwart the lubber's hawse, and learn him better manners: that's wur way o' deein'. Let him knaw it was his duty to stand clear o' a fire-ship.—But, I say, are ye a gud writer?'

"'Rather good,' said I.

"'Shiver me,' said he, 'then yur just the chap for me! I want a bit letter here for a sweetheart o' mine, man; but, smash me! I can't flourish it off at all. Try thy fist at it, mate. Maybe ye can dee a bit at the inditing, tee—for, ye see, she's been at the boarding-school; and, drat me, though I can manage the spelling pretty hobbling, wi' looking at the dictioner for the words, yet I knaw nought about their grammar. Now, I say, if ye understand it, gie her a gud deal o' grammar in't. That's the way to dee their business! Conscience! had my faither keept me another year at the school I would married a duchess.

"I now entered upon the honourable office of confidential secretary to the skipper of a collier. On finishing the letter, I read it to him; and, on hearing it, he danced round the cabin in ecstasy, exclaiming—'Blow me, if that wunna dee,

nought will. I say, if ye turn out as gud a seaman as ye are a scholar, I will make ye my mate, and that's all.

"I thus became a favourite with the skipper from the first; and, not being a bad-natured fellow—though I say it myself—I soon became a favourite with the crew also. I sailed in the collier during three years, and, in that time, I had obtained the forgiveness of my mother—but the countenance of my grandfather never. He cut me off as a prodigal.

"But there was one night that about half-a-dozen of us were upon the lark, as we called it—battling the watchman, and seeing life in London, and, upon the whole, making more mirth than mischief, when, as luck would have it, we ran foul of a press-gang upon Tower Hill. 'What cheer, my hearties?' cried the Luff who headed the gang.

"Some of our party took to their heels, but I stood still; for I didn't care a toss-up of a copper about the matter. I was just as willing to serve the king as another man, if he would pay me for it. So I surrendered at discretion, and the lieutenant called me a 'fine fellow' for so doing. 'Ah, you old shark!' thinks I, 'your purser's grin won't gammon Tom Moffat.'

"One of my shipmates who attempted to run was brought back; and, from my heart I was sorry for him, for he had a wife and four little ones; and I suppose they might sink or swim, live or starve, for all that the service into which he was impressed would see, say, or care, about the matter. Confound me! after all, impressment is too bad. It's a black shame to the navy. It has broken more hearts than ever it made heroes. Why drag away a man, like a dog at a cart tail, against his will? Again I say, it is a shame all over! Why not give better pay, and clear the decks for promotion. Then they would get men—good men, willing men—and the navy would be what it ought to be. I can't away with impressment.

"However, I was taken on board the tender in the river, and, in three or four days, joined a seventy-four off Portsmouth. I liked the service well enough, for our captain was the very model of what an officer ought to be. He was none of your fresh-water, courtly puppies, who are sent to officer the navy because their fathers or their mothers are doing dirty work for the government people on shore. He was none of your butterflies, recommended by a Lord of the

Admiralty, and promoted over the heads of better men, because their relations have court influence. This system is as bad as impressment, every whit. It takes away both heart and hope for a man. Is it not hard for a brave fellow, who has been a lieutenant for ten years, and been in twice ten actions, and behaved nobly in all, to have to lift his hat to a puppy to-day as his superior officer, who was a middy beneath him yesterday? I say it is a shame. Fair play is a jewel; and there should be no promotion but what service and merit procure. But I do say that my old commander was a man every inch of him. He is getting well up the list now, and I hope to live to see him an admiral.

"I had a little library on board the collier; and, amongst my books, which my old skipper brought on board the tender to me himself, was a copy of the Illiad—not Pope's translation, but the original. It was my favourite book. My shipmates marvelled at it, they regarded me as a sort of prodigy, and swore I would be a post-captain some day; and they were wont to look over my shoulder as I read, and point with their finger to a particular word or letter, and inquire—'Tom, what does that mean?'—or 'What does that stand for?'—and replying, when I answered them—'Blow me, but that's funny!'

"At length, they began to call me 'Greek Tom!' and the name coming to the captain's ears he inquired the meaning of it; and, upon being informed, he sent for me aft; and says he, 'Moffat, what's this I hear of you?—you a Greek scholar, eh?' 'Yes, your honour,' said I.

"'The deuce you are!' said he. And he began to put some questions to me, which he found I was more able to answer than he was to ask.

"'Well, my good fellow,' he continued, 'you are out of your proper sphere at present—that's all that I can say.' And he began to ask me about my history and relations; and I told him everything, not even omitting my trip to America, and the loss of my grandfather's watch. 'Well, I must see what I can do for you,' said he. And at first he made me a sort of schoolmaster on board, and afterwards his clerk or secretary. He treated me like a brother.

"We had been in two or three actions, and had had a fair run of prizes, when we were sent upon the American station.

We were lying off Newbury Port, which is about a hundred miles from Boston, and I went ashore for letters. I reached the Post-office, and, as I tapped at the window, and the tin pane was withdrawn—eyes and limbs!—whose face—I say, whose face d'ye think I should see, but that of my own sweet and never-forgotten Margaret Lindsay! It was like a pistol-shot in my heart—I was more dead than alive; and she—why, she fell back with a scream; and her father rushed into the office, and again to the door, to see what had alarmed his daughter. He beheld me as much alarmed as her, but he knew me in a twinkling. He took my hand, and led me into the house. What passed I won't tell you. I found Margaret was not married, but she was more beautiful than ever. We didn't speak much, but our eyes said a thousand things.

"On going on board, I told my commander all that happened. He was, indeed, a good soul, and a considerate one. He saw which way the land lay with me; and, as we were cruising upon the station, and Newbury Port was a sort of rendezvous, he gave me permission to remain a month on shore. I blessed him in my heart, and I could have embraced his knees.

"My mother had been dead for several years—my pay was more than I required—I had nobody to assist out of my prize-money; so that I had saved a trifle. I went ashore therefore to spend a month with Margaret, with my pockets pretty comfortably lined. Why, the month was like a dream—it was like sailing round a romantic coast in fine weather. But before three weeks of it had passed, I prevailed on Margaret to accompany me to the church, and we became man and wife; and her father offered no objections.

"I found it hard to part with her; and, at her entreaty, I would have given up the sea—but then I was in prospect of being made sailing-master—and that was what I call having my bread baked for life.

"But—not to spin my yarn too long or too fine—some months after my marriage, we were ordered upon another station; and, a little before the orders arrived, a letter from my wife informed me that I was about to become a father. I longed to return to her, to fling my arms around her neck, and to kiss the cheek of our little one. But fate had ordered it otherwise. We left the station and we attacked one of

the French Islands in the West Indies. Two boats' crews of us went ashore to storm their batteries. We had already made a sort of breach, and I was resolved to be one of the first to mount it—for I was determined to obtain my promotion to the rank of sailing-master if anything in my power could do it. I was the first, and I believe the only one. I was surrounded, wounded, made prisoner, and for seven years I was shut up in a French prison, without hearing of either wife or child, and very little of my country, or how the game went on.

"At length a change of prisoners took place, and I was one of them. On the first day of my liberty, I wrote to my wife, and I wrote also to my old commander. Within six months I received an appointment as sailing-master; but months and months passed on, and I heard not a syllable concerning my wife. It made me miserable, and my promotion couldn't cheer me. I left no stone unturned to discover where she was, or whether she was dead or living; but it was of no effect. Nothing could I hear concerning her; and many a tear have I shed on the deep sea, and at the dead of night, for her sake.

"Such was the state of suspense I was in for eleven years after my promotion as sailing-master. About that time, our vessel had a turn-up with a French ship of the line, and a frigate; and, at the very close of the action, when one of them, in fact, had struck her colours, a shot carried away my right arm. But, as I told you, I have a pension for it. But it soon healed, and I quitted the service. I went to America, and to Newbury Port, to inquire after my wife, my child (if I had one), and her parents. And there, all that I could learn was—that her father had died fifteen years ago, and that my wife, with an infant daughter, had gone to England. I re-crossed the Atlantic in the first vessel I could find. I determined to search for her through every town and village in the three kingdoms. On landing, I found that my old commander was also on shore. He felt for me, and he did everything in his power to assist me; and we got paragraphs, setting forth all the particulars, inserted into all the newspapers, and they were copied into the papers throughout the country. What could I do more?

"Well, about two months after I had been in England, a

dejected, but beautiful young creature, with a child in her arms, came to my lodgings and inquired for me.

"Heaven and earth! how I started!—how I trembled!—how my heart throbbed, when I gazed upon her countenance, for it bore the engraven lineaments of my wife. Scarce could I speak to her. A tide of feelings swelled in my bosom as though my heart would burst. I thought—I feared a thousand things in a moment.

"She wept; she told me that she had heard of my paragraph in the newspapers. That the circumstances related seemed to connect her with me—that her father's name was Moffat—that he had married her mother at Newbury Port—and other things she stated which the newspapers mentioned not. 'God bless thee, my child! my lost one!' cried I. And I flung my arms around the neck of the poor, weeping, and forlorn being. Her cheeks bespoke want, and her eyes misery. I ordered wine. I seated her on a sofa beside me. I took her child in my arm and I kissed it; but I saw the agony that was heaving in my daughter's breast, and I feared to ask her concerning its father. I saw that all was not right. 'And where is thy mother, love?' said I—'O does she live?'

"'Yes! yes—she lives! she lives!' sobbed my poor child, and placed her hands before her face and wept bitterly.

"'She lives!—she lives!' she repeated; 'but I cannot meet my dear mother again.'

"'My Margaret, then, lives!' said I; 'thank Heaven! But weep not, my own child—my sweet one, do not weep. I am your father. I will protect you. Tell me your story; and, by Heaven! my girl, if you have been injured, I will avenge your wrongs.'

"But she wept more bitterly. I at length learned that my Margaret resided in Scotland, and that my daughter, against her mother's will, had, while a mere girl, married a thoughtless young man, with whom she had come to London, and who had now all but forsaken her."

"I desired to know where I might see him, without his knowing who I was; and receiving the information I sought, I found him with a dozen others, thoughtless as himself, at the billiard table. One-armed and left-handed as I was I played with the best of them; and without discovering my name, I endeavoured to ingratiate myself into the good opinion

of my hopeful son-in-law; and I succeeded. I found him more thoughtless than depraved. He was not beyond reformation; and I asked him home to sup with me, and the invitation was accepted.

"There was a frankness in his manner that gave me hope of him. During supper, I endeavoured to sail round him and to cast the anchor of contrition in his heart. Without directly stating my object, or giving him reason to suspect what my intentions were, 'I spoke daggers' to his conscience, 'but I used none;' and, when I saw that I had brought him to the right point, like King David before Nathan, to pass his own condemnation, I rang the bell, and his wife and child entered the room. But I extended to him my solitary hand in forgiveness, and gave him a father's greeting. My scheme succeeded, and, from that day to this, he has been a husband of whom my daughter has had no cause to be ashamed."

"But the next day we all took our passage for Scotland, where I was to meet my long-lost Margaret. Every mile of our passage seemed a league, every hour a day. But we landed at Leith; and without stopping there an hour, I hired a coach, and we proceeded to Roxburghshire, where she resided. It was mid-day; the coach drew up at the door. My daughter and her child were first handed out, then followed her husband, and I heard a scream of joy as my dear wife beheld her child. But she had just reached the door, with open arms, to welcome her, when I too stepped upon the street. I hurried forward—

"'Margaret!' I cried, 'my Margaret!'

"'Thomas!—my husband! my husband!' she exclaimed, and she flew to meet me.

"We had been parted for more than nineteen years, but we have never been separated an hour, from that day until this. We are contented as the summer day is long—and, once for all, I say, I am as happy as any two-handed man in his Majesty's dominions."

MIDSIDE MAGGY;

OR,

THE BANNOCK O' TOLLISHILL.

"Every bannock had its maik, but the bannock o' Tollishill."
Scottish Proverb

BELIKE, gentle reader, thou hast often heard the proverb quoted above, that "Every bannock had its maik, but the bannock o' Tollishill." The saying hath its origin in a romantic tradition of the Lammermoors, which I shall relate to thee. Tollishill is the name of a sheep-farm in Berwickshire, situated in the parish of Lauder. Formerly, it was divided into three farms, which were occupied by different tenants; and by way of distinguishing it from the others, that in which dwelt the subjects of our present story was generally called Midside, and our heroine obtained the appellation of Midside Maggy. Tollishill was the property of John, second Earl, and afterwards Duke of Lauderdale—a personage whom I shall more than once, in these tales, have occasion to bring before mine readers, and whose character prosperity hath small cause to hold in veneration. Yet it is a black character, indeed, in which there is not to be found one streak of sunshine; and the story of the "Bannock of Tollishill" referreth to such a streak in the history of John, the Lord of Thirlestane.

Time hath numbered somewhat more than a hundred and ninety years since Thomas Hardie became tenant of the principal farm of Tollishill. Now, that the reader may picture Thomas Hardie as he was, and as tradition hath described him, he or she must imagine a tall, strong, and fresh-coloured man of fifty; a few hairs of grey mingling with his

brown locks; a countenance expressive of much good nature and some intelligence; while a Lowland bonnet was drawn over his brow. The other parts of his dress were of coarse, grey, homespun cloth, manufactured in Earlston; and across his shoulders, in summer as well as in winter, he wore the mountain plaid. His principles assimilated to those held by the men of the Covenant; but Thomas, though a native of the hills, was not without the worldly prudence which is considered as being more immediately the characteristic of the buying and selling children of society. His landlord was no favourer of the Covenant; and, though Thomas wished well to the cause, he did not see the necessity for making his laird, the Lord of Lauderdale, his enemy for its sake. He, therefore, judged it wise to remain a neutral spectator of the religious and political struggles of the period.

But Thomas was a bachelor. Half a century had he been in the world, and the eyes of no woman had had power to throw a spark into his heart. In his single, solitary state he was happy, or he thought himself happy; and that is much the same thing. But an accident occurred which led him first to believe, and eventually to feel, that he was but a solitary and comfortless moorland farmer, toiling for he knew not what, and laying up treasure he knew not for whom. Yea, and while others had their wives spinning, carding, knitting, and smiling before them, and their bairns running, laughing, and sporting round about them, he was but a poor, deserted creature, with nobody to speak to, nobody to care for, or to care for him. Every person had some object to strive for and to make them strive, but Thomas Hardie; or, to use his own words, he was just in the situation o' a tewhit that has lost its mate—*te-wheet! te-wheet!* it cried, flapping its wings impatiently and forlornly—and *te-wheet! te-wheet!* answered vacant echo frae the dreary glens.

Thomas had been to Morpeth disposing of a part of his hirsels, and he had found a much better market for them than he anticipated. He returned, therefore, with a heavy purse which generally hath a tendency to create a light and merry heart; and he arrived at Westruther, and went into a hostel, where, three or four times in the year, he was in the habit of spending a cheerful evening with his friends. He had called for a queugh of the landlady's best, and he sat down at his

ease with the liquor before him, for he had but a short way to travel. He also pulled out his tobacco-box and his pipe, and began to inhale the fumes of what, up to that period, was almost a forbidden weed. But we question much, if the royal book of James the Sixth of Scotland and first of England, which he published against the use of tobacco, ever found its way into the Lammermoors, though the Indian weed did, and, therefore, Thomas Hardie sat enjoying his glass and his pipe, unconscious or regardless of the fulminations which he who was king in his boyhood had published against the latter. But he had not sat long, when a fair maiden, an acquaintance of "mine hostess," entered the hostelry, and began to assist her in the cutting out or fashioning of a crimson kirtle. Her voice fell upon the ear of Thomas like the "music of sweet sounds." He had never heard a voice before that not only fell softly on his ear, but left a lingering murmur in his heart. She too was a young thing of not more than eighteen. If ever hair might be called "gowden," it was hers. It was a light and shining bronze, where the prevalence of the golden hue gave a colour to the whole. Her face was a thing of beauty, over which health spread its roseate hue, yet softly, as though the wrestling winds had caused the leaves of the blushing rose to kiss her cheeks, and leave their delicate hues and impression behind them. She was of a middle stature, and her figure was such, although arrayed in homely garments, as would have commanded the worship of a connoisseur of grace and symmetry. But beyond all that kindled a flame within the hitherto obdurate heart of Thomas, was the witching influence of her smile. For a full hour he sat with his eyes fixed upon her; save at intervals, when he withdrew them to look into the unwonted agitation of his own breast, and examine the cause.

"Amongst the daughters of women," thought he unto himself—for he had a sprinkling of the language of the age about him—"none have I seen so beautiful. Her cheeks bloom bonnier than the heather on Tollishill, and her bosom seems saft as the new-shorn fleece. Her smile is like a blink o' sunshine, and would mak summer to those on whom it fell a' the year round."

He also discovered, for the first time, that "Tollishill was a dull place, especially in the winter season." When, therefore, the fair damsel had arrayed the fashion of the kirtle and de-

parted, without once having seemed to observe Thomas, he said unto the good wife of the hostelry—"And wha, noo, if it be a fair question, may that bonnie lassie be?"

"She is indeed a bonnie lassie," answered the landlady, "and a guid lassie, too; and I hae nae doot, but, as ye are a single man, Maister Hardie, yer question is fair enough. Her name is Margaret Lylestone, and she is the only bairn o' a puir infirm widow that cam to live here some twa or three years syne. They cam frae south owre some way, and I am sure they hae seen better days. We thocht at first that the auld woman had been a Catholic; but I suppose that isna the case, though they certainly are baith o' them strong Episcopawlians, and in nae way favourable to the preachers or the word of the Covenant; but I maun say for Maggy, that she is a bonnie, sweet-tempered, and obleeging lassie—though, puir thing, her mother has brocht her up in a wrang way."

Many days had not passed ere Thomas Hardie, arrayed in his Sunday habiliments, paid another visit to Westruther; and he cautiously asked of the goodwife of the hostel many questions concerning Margaret, and although she jeered him, and said that "Maggy would ne'er think o' a grey-haired carle like him," he brooded over the fond fancy; and, although on this visit he saw her not, he returned to Tollishill, thinking of her as his bride. It was a difficult thing for a man of fifty, who had been the companion of solitude from his youth upwards, and who had lived in singie blessedness amidst the silence of the hills, without feeling the workings of the heart, or being subjected to the influence of its passions—I say, it was indeed difficult for such a one to declare, in the ear of a blooming maiden of eighteen, the tale of his first affections. But an opportunity arrived which enabled him to disembosom the burden that pressed upon his heart.

It has been mentioned that Margaret Lylestone and her mother were poor; and the latter, who had long been bowed down with infirmities, was supported by the industry of her daughter. They had also a cow, which was permitted to graze upon the hills without fee or reward; and, with the milk which it produced, and the cheese they manufactured, together with the poor earnings of Margaret, positive want was long kept from them. But the old woman became more and more infirm—the hand of death seemed stretching over her. She

required nourishment, which Margaret could not procure for her; and, that it might be procured—that her mother might live and not die—the fair maiden sent the cow to Kelso to be sold, from whence the seller was to bring with him the restoratives that her parent required.

Now, it so was that Thomas Hardie, the tenant of Tollishill, was in Kelso market when the cow of Widow Lylestone was offered for sale; and, as it possessed the characteristic marks of a good milcher, he inquired to whom it belonged. On being answered, he turned round for a few moments, and stood thoughtful; but again turning to the individual who had been intrusted to dispose of it, he inquired—

"And wherefore is she selling it?"

"Really, Maister Hardie," replied the other, "I could not positively say, but I hae little doot it is for want—absolute necessity. The auld woman's very frail and very ill—I hae to tak a' sort o' things oot to her the nicht frae the doctor's after selling the cow, and it's no in the power o' things that her dochter, industrious as she is, should be able to get them for her otherwise."

Thomas again turned aside, and drew his sleeve across his eyes. Having inquired the price sought for the cow, he handed the money to the seller, and gave the animal in charge to one of his herdsmen. He left the market earlier than usual, and directed his servant that the cow should be taken to Westruther.

It was drawing towards gloaming before Thomas approached the habitation of the widow; and before he could summon courage to enter it for the first time, he sauntered for several minutes, backward and forward on the moor, by the side of the Blackadder, which there silently wends its way, as a dull and simple burn, through the moss. He felt all the awkwardness of an old man struggling beneath the influence of a young feeling. He thought of what he should say, how he should act, and how he would be received. At length he had composed a short introductory and explanatory speech which pleased him. He thought it contained both feeling and delicacy (according to his notions of the latter) in their proportions, and after repeating it three or four times over by the side of the Blackadder, he proceeded towards the cottage, still repeating it to himself as he went. But when he raised his

hand and knocked at the door, his heart gave a similar knock upon his bosom, as though it mimicked him; and every idea, every word of the introductory speech which he had studied and repeated again and again, short though it was, was knocked from his memory. The door was opened by Margaret, who invited him to enter. She was beautiful as when he first beheld her—he thought more beautiful—for she now spoke to him. Her mother sat in an arm-chair, by the side of the peat fire, and was supported by pillows. He took off his bonnet, and performed an awkward, but his best salutation.

"I beg your pardon," said he, hesitatingly, "for the liberty I have taken in calling upon you. But—I was in Kelso the day—and"—— He paused, and turned his bonnet once or twice in his hands. "And," he resumed, "I observed, or rather I should say, I learned that ye intended to sell your cow; but I also heard that ye was very ill, and"—— Here he made another pause. "I say I heard that ye was very ill, and I thocht it would be a hardship for ye to part wi' crummie, and especially at a time when ye are sure to stand maist in need o' every help. So I bought the cow—but, as I say, it would be a very great hardship for ye to be without the milk, and what the cheese may bring, at a time like this; and, therefore, I hae ordered her to be brocht back to ye, and ane o' my men will bring her hame presently. Never consider the cow as mine, for a bachelor farmer like me can better afford to want the siller, than ye can to want yer cow; and I micht hae spent it far mair foolishly, and wi' less satisfaction. Indeed, if ye only but think that good I've dune, I'm mair than paid."

"Maister Hardie," said the widow, "what have I, a stranger widow woman, done to deserve this kindness at your hands? Or how is it in the power o' words for me to thank ye? HE who provideth for the widow and the fatherless will not permit you to go unrewarded, though I cannot. O Margaret, hinny," added she, "thank our benefactor as we ought to thank him, for I cannot."

Fair Margaret's thanks were a flood of tears.

"Oh, dinna greet!" said Thomas; "I would ten times owre rather no hae bocht the cow, but hae lost the siller, than I would hae been the cause o' a single tear rowin' down yer bonnie cheeks."

"O sir," answered the widow, "but they are tears o gratitude that distress my bairn, and nae tears are mair precious."

I might tell how Thomas sat down by the peat fire between the widow and her daughter, and how he took the hand of the latter, and entreated her to dry up her tears, saying that his chief happiness would be to be thought their friend, and to deserve their esteem. The cow was brought back to the widow's, and Thomas returned to Tollishill with the herdsman. But, from that night, he became almost a daily visitor at the house of Mrs. Lylestone. He provided whatever she required —all that was ordered for her. He spoke not of love to Margaret, but he wooed her through his kindness to her mother. It was, perhaps, the most direct avenue to her affections. Yet, it was not because Thomas thought so that he pursued this course, but because he wanted confidence to make his appeal in a manner more formal or direct.

The widow lingered many months; and all that lay within the power of human means he caused to be done for her, to restore her to health and strength, or at least to smooth her dying pillow. But the last was all that could be done. Where death spreadeth the shadow of his wing, there is no escape from sinking beneath the baneful influence of its shade. Mrs. Lylestone, finding that the hour of her departure drew near, took the hand of her benefactor, and when she had thanked him for all the kindness which he had shown towards her, she added—

"But, O sir, there is one thing that makes the hand of death heavy. When the sod is cauld upon my breast, who will look after my puir orphan—my bonnie faitherless and motherless Margaret? Where will she find a hame?"

"O mem," said Thomas, "if the like o' me durst say it she needna hae far to gang, to find a hame and a heart, too. Would she only be mine, I would be her protector—a' that I have should be hers."

A gleam of joy brightened in the eyes of the dying widow. "Margaret!" she exclaimed faintly; and Margaret laid her face upon the bed and wept. "O my bairn! my puir bairn!" continued her mother, "shall I see ye protected and provided for, before I am 'where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest,' which canna be lang noo?"

Thomas groaned—tears glistened in his eyes—he held his breath in suspense. The moment of trial, of condemnation or acquittal, of happiness or misery, had arrived. With an eager impatience he waited to hear her answer. But Margaret's heart was prepared for his proposal. He had first touched it with gratitude—he had obtained her esteem; and where these sentiments prevail in the bosom of a woman, whose affections have not been bestowed upon another, love is not far distant—if it be not between them, and a part of both.

"Did ever I disobey you, mother?" sobbed Margaret, raising her parent's hand to her lips.

"No, my bairn, no!" answered the widow. And raising herself in the bed, she took her daughter's hand and placed it in the hand of Thomas Hardie.

"Oh!" said he, "is this possible? Does my bonnie Margaret really consent to mak me the happiest man on earth? Shall I hae a gem at Tollishill that I wadna exchange for a monarch's diadem?"

It is sufficient to say that the young and lovely Margaret Lylestone became Mrs. Hardie of Tollishill; or, as she was generally called, "*Midside Maggie.*" Her mother died within three months after their marriage, but died in peace, having, as she said, "seen her dear bairn blessed wi' a leal and a kind guidman, and ane that was weel to do."

For two years after their marriage, and not a happier couple than Thomas and Midside Maggie was to be found on all the long Lammermoors, in the Merse, nor yet in the broad Lothians. They saw the broom and the heather bloom in their season, and they heard the mavis sing before their dwelling; yea, they beheld the snow falling on the mountains, and the drift sweeping down the glens; but while the former delighted, the latter harmed them not, and from all they drew mutual joy and happiness. Thomas said that "Maggy was a matchless wife;" and she, that "he was a kind, kind husband."

But the third winter was one of terror among the hills. It was near the new year, the snow began to fall on a Saturday, and when the following Friday came, the storm had not ceased. It was accompanied by frost and a fierce wind, and

the drift swept and whirled like awful pillars of alabaster, down the hills, and along the glens —

"Sweeping the flocks and herds."

Fearful was the wrath of the tempest on the Lammermoors. Many farmers suffered severely, but none more severely than Thomas Hardie of Tollishill. Hundreds of his sheep had perished in a single night. He was brought from prosperity to the brink of adversity.

But another winter came round. It commenced with a severity scarce inferior to that which had preceded it, and again scores of his sheep were buried in the snow. But February had not passed, and scarce had the sun entered what is represented as the astronomical sign of the *two fish* in the heavens, when the genial influence of spring fell with almost summer warmth upon the earth. During the night, the dews came heavily on the ground, and the sun sucked it up in a vapour. But the herbage grew rapidly, and the flocks ate of it greedily, and licked the dew ere the sun rose to dry it up. It brought the murrain amongst them; they died by hundreds; and those that even fattened, but did not die, no man would purchase; or if purchased, it was only upon the understanding that the money should be returned if the animals were found unsound. These misfortunes were too much for Thomas Hardie. Within two years he found himself a ruined man. But he grieved not for the loss of his flocks, nor yet for his own sake, but for that of his fair young wife, whom he loved as the apple of his eye. Many, when they heard of his misfortunes, said that they were sorry for bonnie Midside Maggy.

But, worst of all, the rent-day of Thomas Hardie drew near, and, for the first time since he had held a farm, he was unable to meet his landlord with the money in his hand. Margaret beheld the agony of his spirit, and she knew its cause. She put on her Sunday hood and kirtle; and professing to her husband that she wished to go to Lauder, she took her way to Thirlestane Castle, the residence of their proud landlord, before whom every tenant in arrear trembled. With a shaking hand she knocked at the hall door, and with much perseverance and entreaty, was admitted into the presence of the haughty Earl. She curtsied low before him.

"Well, what want ye, my bonnie lass?" said Lauderdale, eyeing her significantly.

"May it please yer lordship," replied Margaret, "I am the wife o' yer tenant, Thomas Hardie o' Tollishill; an' a guid tenant he has been to yer lordship for twenty years and mair, as yer lordship maun weel ken."

"He has been my tenant for more than twenty years, say ye?" interrupted Lauderdale; "and ye say ye are his wife, why looking on thy bonnie face, I should say that the heather hasna bloomed twenty times on the knowes o' Tollishill since thy mother bore thee. Yet ye say ye are his wife! Beshrew me, but Thomas Hardie is a man of taste. Arena ye his daughter?"

"No, my lord; his first, his only, an' his lawfu' wife—an' I would only say, that to ye an' yer faither before ye, for mair than twenty years, he has paid his rent regularly an' faithfully; but the seasons hae visited us sairly, very sairly, for two years successively, my lord, an' the drift has destroyed an' the rot rooted oot oor flocks, sae that we are hardly able to haud up oor heads amang oor neebors, an' to meet yer lordship at yer rent-day is oot o' oor power; therefore, hae I come to ye to implore ye that we may hae time to gather oor feet, an' to gie yer lordship an' every man his due, when it is in oor power."

"Hear me, gudewife," rejoined the Earl; "were I to listen to such stories as yours, I might have every farmer's wife on my estates coming whimpering and whinging, till I was left to shake a purse wi' naething in't, and allowing others the benefit o' my lands. But it is not every day that a face like yours comes in the shape o' sorrow before me, and, for a kiss o' your cherry mou' (and ye may take my compliments to your auld man for his taste), ye shall have a discharge for your half-year's rent, and see if that may set your husband on his feet again."

"Na, yer lordship, na!" replied Margaret; "it would ill become ony woman in my situation o' life, an' especially a married ane, to be daffin wi' sic as yer lordship. I am the wife o' Thomas Hardie, wha is a guid guidman to me, an' I cam here this day to entreat ye to deal kindly wi' him in the day o' his misfortune."

"Troth," replied Lauderdale, who could feel the force of

virtue in others, though he did not always practise it in his own person—"I hae heard o' the blossom o' Tollishill before, and a bonnie flower ye are to blossom in an auld man's bower, but I find ye modest as ye are bonnie, an' upon one condition will I grant yer request. Ye hae tauld me o' yer hirsels being buried wi' the drift, an' that the snaw has covered the May primrose on Leader braes ; now it is Martinmas, an' if in June, ye bring me a snowball, not only shall ye be quit o' yer back rent, but ye shall sit free in Tollishill until Martinmas next. But see that in June ye bring me the snowball or the rent."

Margaret made her obeisance before the Earl, and, thanking him, withdrew. But she feared the coming of June ; for to raise the rent even then she well knew would be a thing impossible, and she thought also it would be equally so to preserve a snowball beneath the melting sun of June. Though young, she had too much prudence and honesty to keep a secret from her husband ; it was her maxim, and it was a good one, "that there ought to be no secrets between a man and his wife, which the one would conceal from the other." She therefore told him of her journey to Thirlestane, and of all that had passed between her and the Earl. Thomas kissed her cheek, and called her his "bonnie, artless Maggy ;" but he had no more hope of seeing a snowball in June than she had, and he said, "the bargain was like the bargain of a crafty Lauderdale."

Again the winter storms howled upon the Lammermoors, and the snow lay deep upon the hills. Thomas and his herdsmen were busied in exertions to preserve the remainder of his flocks; but one day, when the wrestling winds breathed with thawing influence upon the snow-clad hills, Margaret went forth to where there was a small, deep, and shadowed ravine by the side of the Leader. In it the rivulet formed a pool and seemed to sleep, and the grey trout loved to lie at ease ; for a high dark rock, over which the brushwood grew, overhung it, and the rays of the sun fell not upon it. In the rock, and near the side of the stream, was a deep cavity, and Margaret formed a snowball on the brae top, and she rolled it slowly down into the shadowed glen, till it attained the magnitude of an avalanche in miniature. She trod upon it, and pressed it firmly together, until it obtained almost the

hardness and consistency of ice. She rolled it far into the cavity, and blocked up the mouth of the aperture, so that neither light nor air might penetrate the strange coffer, in which she had deposited the equally strange rent of Tollishill. Verily, common as ice-houses are in our day, let not Midside Maggy be deprived of the merit of their invention.

I have said that it was her maxim to keep no secret from her husband; but as it is said there is no rule without an exception, even so it was in the case of Margaret, and there was one secret which she communicated not to Thomas, and that was—the secret of the hidden snowball.

But June came, and Thomas Hardie was a sorrowful man. He had in no measure overcome the calamities of former seasons, and he was still unprepared with his rent. Margaret shared not his sorrow, but strove to cheer him, and said—

"We shall hae a snawba' in June, though I climb to the top o' Cheviot for it."

"O my bonny lassie," replied he—and he could see the summit of Cheviot from his farm—"dinna deceive yersel' wi' what could only be words spoken in jest; but at ony rate I perceive there has been nae snaw on Cheviot for a month past."

Now, not a week had passed but Margaret had visited the aperture in the ravine, where the snowball was concealed, not through idle curiosity, to perceive whether it had melted away, but more effectually to stop up every crevice that might have been made in the materials with which she had blocked up the mouth of the cavity.

But the third day of the dreadful month had not passed, when a messenger arrived at Tollishill from Thirlestane with the abrupt mandate—"*June has come!*"

"And we shall be at Thirlestane the morn," answered Margaret.

"O my doo," said Thomas, "what nonsense are ye talking!—that isna like ye, Margaret; I'll be in Greenlaw jail the morn; and oor bits o' things in the hoose, and oor flocks, will be seized by the harpies o' the law—and the only thing that distresses me is, what is to come o' you, hinny."

"Dinna dree the death ye'll never dee," said Margaret

affectionately; "we shall see, if we be spared, what the morn will bring."

"The fortitude o' yer mind, Margaret," said Thomas, taking her hand; and he intended to have said more, to have finished a sentence in admiration of her worth, but his heart filled, and he was silent.

On the following morning Margaret said unto him—

"Now, Thomas, if ye are ready, we'll gang to Thirlestane, it is aye waur to expect or think o' an evil than to face it."

"Margaret, dear," said he, "I canna comprehend ye—wherefore should I thrust my head into the lion's den? It will soon enough seek me in my path."

Nevertheless she said unto him, "Come," and bade him be of good heart; and he arose and accompanied her. But she conducted him to the deep ravine, where the waters seem to sleep, and no sunbeam ever falls; and, as she removed the earth and the stones, with which she had blocked up the mouth of the cavity in the rock, he stood wondering. She entered the aperture, and rolled forth the firm mass of snow, which was yet too large to be lifted by hands. When Thomas saw this, he smiled and wept at the same instant, and he pressed his wife's cheek to his bosom, and said—

"Great has been the care o' my poor Margaret, but it is o' no avail, for though ye hae proved mair than a match for the seasons, the proposal was but a jest o' Lauderdale."

"What is a man but his word?" replied Margaret; "and him a nobleman too."

"Nobility are but men," answered Thomas, "and seldom better men than ither folk. Believe me, if we were to gang afore him wi' a snawba' in oor hands, we should only get lauched at for oor pains."

"It was his ain agreement," added she, "and, at ony rate, we can be naething the waur for seeing if he will abide by it."

Breaking the snowy mass, she rolled up a portion of it in a napkin, and they went towards Thirlestane together; though often did Thomas stop by the way and say—

"Margaret, dear, I'm perfectly ashamed to gang upon this business; as sure as I am standing here, as I have tauld ye, we will only get oorselves lauched at."

"I would rather be lauched at," added she, "than despised

for breaking my word; and, if oor laird break his noo, wha wadna despise him?"

Harmonious as their wedded life had hitherto been, there was what might well-nigh be called bickerings between them on the road, for Thomas felt or believed that she was leading him on a fool's errand. But they arrived at the castle of Thirlestane, and were ushered into the mansion of its proud lord.

"Ha!" said the Earl, as they entered, "bonny Midside Maggy and her auld goodman! Well, what bring ye?—the rents o' Tollishill, or their equivalent?" Thomas looked at his young wife, for he saw nothing to give him hope on the countenance of Lauderdale, and he thought that he pronounced the word *equivalent* with a sneer.

"I bring ye snaw in June, my lord," replied Margaret, "agreeably to the terms o' yer bargain; and am sorry, for your sake and oors, that it hasna yet been in oor power to bring gowd instead o't."

Loud laughed the Earl as Margaret unrolled the huge snowball before him, and Thomas thought unto himself, "I said how it would be." But Lauderdale, calling for his writing materials, sat down and wrote, and he placed in the hands of Thomas a discharge, not only for his back rent, but for all that should otherwise be due at the ensuing Martinmas.

Thomas Hardie bowed and bowed again before the Earl, low and yet lower, awkwardly and still more awkwardly, and he endeavoured to thank him, but his tongue faltered in the performance of its office. He could have taken his hand in his and wrung it fervently, leaving the fingers to express what his tongue could not; but his laird was an Earl, and there was a necessary distance to be observed between an Earl and a Lammermoor farmer.

"Thank not me, goodman," said Lauderdale, "but thank the modesty and discretion o' yer winsome wife."

Margaret was silent, but gratitude for the kindness which the Earl had shown unto her husband and herself took deep root in her heart. Gratitude, indeed, formed a predominating principle in her character, and fitted her even for acts of heroism.

The unexpected and unwonted generosity of the Earl had enabled Thomas Hardie to overcome the losses with which

the fury of the seasons had overwhelmed him, and he prospered, beyond any farmer on the hills. But while he prospered, the Earl of Lauderdale, in his turn, was overtaken by adversity. The stormy times of the civil wars raged, and it is well known with what devotedness Lauderdale followed the fortunes of the king. When the Commonwealth began, he was made prisoner, conveyed to London, and confined in the Tower. There nine weary years of captivity crept slowly and gloomily over him; but they neither taught him mercy to others nor to moderate his ambition, as was manifested when power and prosperity again cast their beams upon him. But he now lingered in the Tower, without prospect or hope of release, living upon the bare sustenance of a prisoner, while his tenants dwelt on his estates, and did as they pleased with his rents, as though they should not again behold the face of a landlord.

But Midside Maggy grieved for the fate of him whose generosity had brought prosperity, such as they had never known before, to herself and to her husband; and, in the fulness of her gratitude, she was ever planning schemes for his deliverance; and she urged upon her husband that it was their duty to attempt to deliver their benefactor from captivity, as he had delivered them from the iron grasp of ruin, when misfortune lay heavily on them. Now, as duly as the rent day came, from the Martinmas to which the snowball had been his discharge, Thomas Hardie faithfully and punctually locked away his rent to the last farthing, that he might deliver it into the hands of his laird should he again be permitted to claim his own; but he saw not in what way they could attempt his deliverance, as his wife proposed.

"Thomas," said she, "there are ten lang years o' rent due, and we hae the siller locked away. It is o' nae use to us, for it isna oors; but it may be o' use to him. It would enable him to fare better in his prison, and maybe to put a handfu' o' gowd into the hands o' his keepers, and thereby to escape abroad, and it wad furnish him wi' the means o' living when he was abroad. Remember his kindness to us, and think that there is nae sin equal to the sin o' ingratitude."

"But," added Thomas, "in what way could we get the money to him? for, if we've to send it, it would never reach him, and as a prisoner, he wouldna be allowed to receive it."

"Let us tak it to him oorsels, then," said Margaret.

"Tak it oorsels!" exclaimed Thomas, in amazement, "a' the way to London! It is oot o' the question a'thegither, Margaret. We wad be robbed o' every plack before we got half way; or, if we were even there, hoo, in a' the world, do ye think we could get it to him, or that we would be allooed to see him."

"Leave that to me," was her reply; "only say ye will gang, and a' that shall be accomplished. There is nae obstacle in the way but the want o' yer consent. But the debt, and the ingratitude o' it thegither, hang heavy upon my heart."

Thomas at length yielded to the importunities of his wife, and agreed that they should make a pilgrimage to London, to pay his rent to his captive laird; though how they were to carry the gold in safety, through an unsettled country, a distance of more than three hundred miles, was a difficulty he could not overcome. But Margaret removed his tears; she desired him to count out the gold, and place it before her; and when he had done so, she went to the meal-tub and took out a quantity of pease and of barley meal mixed, sufficient to knead a goodly fadge or bannock; and when she had kneaded it, and rolled it out, she took the golden pieces and pressed them into the paste of the embryo bannock, and again she doubled it together, and again rolled it out, and kneaded into it the remainder of the gold. She then fashioned it into a thick bannock, and placing it on the hearth, covered it with the red ashes of the peats.

Thomas sat marvelling, as the formation of the singular purse proceeded, and when he beheld the operation completed, and the bannock placed upon the hearth to bake, he only exclaimed—"Weel, woman's ingenuity dings a'! I wadna hae thocht o' the like o' that, had I lived a thousand years! O Margaret, hinny, but ye are a strange ane."

"Hoots," replied she, "I'm sure ye micht easily hae imagined that it was the safest plan we could hae thocht upon to carry the siller in safety; for I am sure there isna a thief between the Tweed and Lun'on toun, that would covet or carry awa a bear bannock."

"Troth, my doo, and I believe yer richt," replied Thomas, "but wha could hae thocht o' sic an expedient? Sure

there never was a bannock baked like the bannock o' Tollishill."

On the third day after this, an old man and a fair lad, before the sun had yet risen, were observed crossing the English Borders. They alternately carried a wallet across their shoulders, which contained a few articles of apparel and a bannock. They were dressed as shepherds, and passengers turned and gazed on them as they passed along; for the beauty of the youth's countenance excited their admiration. Never had Lowland bonnet covered so fair a brow. The elder stranger was Thomas Hardie, and the youth none other than his Midside Maggy.

I will not follow them through the stages of their long and weary journey, nor dwell upon the perils and adventures they encountered by the way. But, on the third week after they had left Tollishill, and when they were beyond the town called Stevenage, and almost within sight of the metropolis, they were met by an elderly military-looking man, who, struck with the lovely countenance of the seeming youth, their dress, and way-worn appearance, accosted them, saying—"Good morrow, strangers, ye seem to have travelled far. Is this fair youth your son, old man?"

"He is a gay sib freend," answered Thomas.

"And whence come ye?" continued the stranger.

"Frae Leader Haughs, on the bonny borders o' the north countrie," replied Margaret.

"And whence go ye?" resumed the other.

"First tell me wha ye may be that are sae inquisitive," interrupted Thomas, in a tone which betrayed something like impatience.

"Some call me George Monk," replied the stranger mildly; "others, Honest George. I am a general in the Parliamentary army." Thomas reverentially raised his hand to his bonnet, and bowed his head.

"Then pardon me, sir," added Margaret, "and if ye indeed be the guid and gallant general, sma' offence will ye tak at onything that may be said amiss by a country laddie. We are tenants o' the Lord o' Lauderdale, whom ye now keep in captivity; and, though we mayna think as he thinks, yet we never faund him but a guid landlord; and little guid, in my opinion, it can do to onybody to keep him, as he has been noo for nine years,

caged up like a bird. Therefore, though oor ain business that has brought us up to London should fail, I winna regret the journey, since it has afforded me an opportunity o' seein' yer Excellency, and soliciting yer interest, which maun be pooerfu', in behalf o' oor laird, and that ye would release him frae his prison, and, if he michtna remain in this country, obtain permission for him to gang abroad."

"Ye plead fairly and honestly for yer laird, fair youth," returned the general; "yet, though he is no man to be trusted, I needs say he has had his portion of captivity measured out abundantly; and, since ye have minded me of him, ere a week go round I will think of what may be done for Lauderdale." Other questions were asked and answered, some truly, and some evasively; and Thomas and Margaret, blessing Honest George in their hearts, went on their way rejoicing at having met him.

On arriving in London, she laid aside the shepherd's garb in which she had journeyed, and resumed her wonted apparel. On the second day after their arrival, she went out upon Tower-hill, dressed as a Scottish peasant girl, with a basket on her arm; and in the basket were a few ballads, and the bannock of Tollis-hill. She affected silliness, and, as she stood singing before the gate—"What want ye, pretty face?" inquired the officer of the guard. "Your alms, if ye please," said she, smiling innocently, "and to sing a bonny Scotch sang to the Laird o' Lauderdale."

The officer and the sentinels laughed; and, after she had sung them another song or two, she was permitted to enter the gate, and a soldier pointed out to her the room in which Lauderdale was confined. On arriving before the grated windows of his prison, she raised her eyes towards them, and began to sing "*Leader Haughs.*" The wild, sweet melody of his native land, drew Lauderdale to the windows of his prison-house, and in the countenance of the minstrel he remembered the lovely features of Midside Maggy. He requested permission of the keeper that she should be admitted to his presence, and his request was complied with.

"Bless thee, sweet face! said the Earl, as she was admitted into his prison; "and you have not forgotten the snowball in June?" And he took her hand to raise it to his lips.

"Hooly, hooly, my guid Lord," said she, withdrawing her

hand; "my fingers were made for nae sic purpose—Thomas Hardie is here"—and she laid her hand upon her fair bosom—"though now standing without the yett o' the Tower."

Lauderdale again wondered, and, with a look of mingled curiosity and confusion, inquired—"Wherefore do ye come—and why do ye seek me?"

"I brocht ye a snawba' before," said she, "for yer rent—I bring ye a bannock noo." And she took the bannock from the basket and placed it before him.

"Woman," added he, "are ye really as demented as I thocht ye but feigned to be, when ye sang before the window?"

"The proof o' the bannock," replied Margaret, "will be in the breakin' o't."

"Then, goodwife, it will not be easily proved,"—said he, and he took the bannock, and with some difficulty broke it over his knee; but, when he beheld the golden coins that were kneaded through it, for the first, perhaps the last and only time in his existence, the Earl of Lauderdale burst into tears, and exclaimed—"Well, every bannock has its maik but the bannock o' Tollishill! Yet, kind as ye hae been, the gold is useless to ane that groans in hopeless captivity."

"Yours has been a long captivity," said Margaret; "but it is not hopeless; and, if honest General Monk is to be trusted, from what he tauld me, not three days by-gane, before a week gae round, ye will be at liberty to go abroad, and there the bannock o' Tollishill may be o' use."

The wonder of Lauderdale increased, and he replied—

"Monk will keep his word, but what mean ye of him?"

And she related to him the interview they had had with the General by the way. Lauderdale took her hand, a ray of hope and joy spread over his face, and he added—

"Never shall ye rue the bakin' o' the bannock, if auld times come back again."

Margaret left the Tower, singing as she had entered it, and joined her husband, whom she found leaning over the railing around the moat, and anxiously waiting her return. They spent a few days more in London, to rest and to gaze upon its wonders, and again set out upon their journey to Tollishill. General Monk remembered his promise; within a week, the Earl of Lauderdale was liberated, with permission

to go abroad, and there, as Margaret had intimated, he found the bannock of Tollishill of service.

A few more years passed round, during which old Thomas Hardie still prospered; but during those years the Commonwealth came to an end, the King was recalled, and with him, as one of his chief favourites, returned the Earl of Lauderdale. And when he arrived in Scotland, clothed with power, whatever else he forgot, he remembered the bannock of Tollishill. Arrayed in what might have passed as royal state, and attended by fifty of his followers, he rode in princely pomp to the dwelling of Thomas Hardie and Midside Maggy; and when they came forth to meet him, he dismounted, and drew forth a costly silver girdle of strange workmanship, and fastened it round her jimp waist, saying—

"Wear this, for now it is my turn to be grateful; and for your husband's life, and your life, and the life o' the generation after ye" (for they had children), "ye shall sit rent free on the lands ye now farm. For, truly, every bannock had its maik but the bannock o' Tollishill."

Thomas and Margaret felt their hearts too full to express their thanks; and, ere they could speak, the Earl, mounting his horse, rode towards Thirlestane; and his followers, waving their bonnets, shouted—"Long live Midside Maggie, queen of Tollishill."

Such is the story of "The Bannock o' Tollishill;" and it is only necessary to add, for the information of the curious, that I believe the silver girdle may be seen until this day, in the neighbourhood of Tollishill, and in the possession of a descendant of Midside Maggy, to whom it was given.

THE FIRST AND SECOND MARRIAGE.

"I BEG your pardon, sir," said a venerable-looking, white-headed man, accosting me one day, about six weeks ago, as I was walking alone near the banks of the Whitadder; 'ye are the author of the "Border Tales," sir,—are ye not?'"

Not being aware of anything in the "Tales of the Borders" of which I need to be ashamed, and moreover being accustomed to meet with such salutations, after glancing at the stranger, with the intention, I believe, of taking the measure of his mind, or scrutinizing his motive in asking the question, I answered—"I am, sir."

"Then, sir," said he, "I can tell ye a true story, and one that happened upon the Borders here within my recollection, and which was also within my own knowledge, which I think would make a capital tale."

Now, I always rejoice in hearing any tale or legend from the lips of a grey-haired chronicler. I do not recollect the period when I did not take an interest in such things; and a tradition of the olden time, or a tale that pictured human nature as it is, ever made the unceasing birr, birring of the spinning-wheel—which the foot, belike, of an aged widow kept in perpetual motion—as agreeable to me as the choicest music. For, what is tradition, but the fragments which History left or lost in its progress to eternity; and which Poetry, following in its wake, gathered up as treasures too precious to be overwhelmed by the approaching waves of oblivion, and, breathing upon them the influence of its own immortal spirit, embalmed them in the hearts and in the

memories of men unto all generations? Though, therefore, it was no ancient legend which the stranger had to relate, yet, knowing that it might not on that account be the less interesting, I thanked him, "and with greedy ears devoured up his discourse."

The story which he then related to me, I shall therefore, after him, communicate to my readers.

You will excuse me in not mentioning the name of the town in which the chief incidents mentioned in our story occurred. There may be some yet living to whom some of them might not be agreeable. I shall, therefore, speak of it as the town of H——, and other circumstances referred to may lead you to form an idea of "its whereabouts."

Many years have passed—at least forty—since the period at which our story commences; and there then dwelt in the town of H—— one Walter Kerr. (So you will allow me to call him.) His parents were what are generally called respectable sort of people; for the house in which they dwelt was their own, and there were also three or four others, all very good and respectable-looking houses (as we say again), the rents of which they received from their tenants. But there is no word in our language to which less respect is shown than the word respectability. It is prostituted every day. It is no matter whether a man be the proprietor of one house, one acre, one pound, or a hundred houses, a thousand acres, and ten thousand pounds; neither houses, acres, nor money can make him truly respectable. As the sun, moon, and stars shed light upon the earth, so do honesty, virtue and strict integrity confer respectability on the head of their possessor. I care not what a man's situation in life may be, nor whether he be a hewer of wood or a drawer of water, the lord of a forest, or one who hath a fleet upon the seas: show me a good, a virtuous, and an upright man—and there is a respectable man, be his rank or situation in life what it may. The parents of Walter Kerr, however, were respectable in a better and a truer sense of the term than that of being merely persons of a certain property; they were Christians not only in their profession but in their practice. Walter was by far the cleverest of the family; and from his boyhood his parents designed him for the pulpit, and gave him an education accordingly. Like many parents, they thought that his clever-

ness was a sufficient reason why they should bring him up to the sacred profession, without once considering how far the seriousness of his thoughts and habits fitted him for preparing for the office. It must be acknowledged, however, that in this they were not singular. We find hundreds who, without perceiving either cleverness or piety in their favourite son, resolve to make him a minister. Yea, frequently, from his very cradle his calling is determined. I remember having heard a good woman say—"If I live to have another son, and he be spared to me, I shall bring him up for the kirk!"

But the parents of Walter Kerr were possessed of more discretion; and when they found that he was averse to their proposal of his becoming a preacher, they abandoned the idea, though not without reluctance, and some tears on the part of his mother. Now, Walter was a youth of a gentle temper and an affectionate heart; but at the same time he seemed formed for being what you would term a man of business. He was shrewd, active, speculative, and calculating, with quite a sufficient degree of caution, as ballast, to regulate his more ardent propensities. At his own request, he was bound apprentice to a general merchant in his native town; and before he was twenty-one years of age, he commenced business for himself. He began with but a small stock in trade; for his parents could not afford a great deal to set him up. Yet he was attentive to business; he pushed it, and his trade increased, and his stock became more various. He had scarcely, however, been two years in business, when he took unto himself a portionless wife. His parents were displeased—they looked upon him as lost. Every one said that he had done a foolish thing, and agreed that it was madness in him to marry, at least so hastily, and before he could say that even the goods in his shop were his own. But people are very apt to talk a great deal of nonsense upon this subject. The important question is not *when* a man marries, but *who* he marries. They talk of a wife tying up his hands, and placing a barrier before his prospects; in short, as bringing a blight over his worldly expectations, like an untimely frost nipping and withering an opening bud. Now, all this is mere twaddle—a showing of self-wisdom, to make known how much more wisely we have or would have acted than the person referred to. It is one of the thousand popular fallacies which

ever float on the surface of the chit-chat of society. A married man, young or old, is always a more responsible sort of character than a bachelor. If a man take unto himself an amiable and a prudent wife, even though she bring him not a shilling as a dowry, and although he may be young in years and a beginner in business, he doeth well. Had he doubled his stock, his credit, and his custom, he would not have done better; for he has a double motive to do so. He has found one to beguile his dulness, to soothe care, to cheer him forward, and to stimulate him to exertion; and that, too, tenderly as the breath of May fanneth and kisseth the young leaves and flowers into life and beauty. But all this dependeth, as hath been said, upon her amiableness and prudence; for, if the wife whom a man taketh for "better for worse," possess not these indispensable requisites, he weddeth a living sorrow, he nurseth an adder in his bosom, he giveth his right hand to ruin.

Now, the wife of Walter Kerr possessed those qualities which rendereth a virtuous woman as a crown of glory to her husband. She was the daughter of a decayed farmer, and her name was Hannah Jerdan. To her the misfortunes of her parents were not such; for, while they had made her a stranger to luxury, they had introduced her to the acquaintanceship of frugality and industry. At the time she gave her hand to Walter Kerr, she was scarce twenty; and to have looked on her, you would have thought of some fair and lovely flower which sought the sequestered dale or the shaded glen, where its beauties might blush unseen—young, modest, meek, affectionate, and beautiful, man never led a lovelier bride to the altar. Her husband soon found that whatever the world might think or say of the step he had taken, he had done well and wisely. She not only became his assistant in his business, and one who took much care and anxiety from his mind, but her affection fell upon his bosom like the shadow of an angel's wing, that was spread over him to guard him from evil; and he found her, too, as a monitor whispering truth in the accents of love. If he acquired money in trade, she taught him how to keep it and profit by it—and that is a "secret worth knowing." Let it not be supposed that she was one of those miserly beings who scrape farthings together for the sake of hoarding them. In her spirit, mean-

ness had no place; but there were two proverbs which she never suffered herself to forget, or those around her to neglect, and those were, that a "penny saved is a penny gained," and, "wilful waste makes woeful want." Nor do I wonder that the latter saying took deep root in her heart; for as having experienced privation in the days of her father's distress, there is nothing can be more painful to those who have known and felt what want is, than to see food, for want of which they were once ready to perish, wasted; and that, too, perchance, while a hunger-stricken beggar has been turned rudely from the door while he prayed for a morsel to eat. She would not see the crumbs which fell from the table wasted. In this her husband readily perceived the propriety of her conduct, and he esteemed her the more as he witnessed it; but the force of her first adage, that "a penny saved is a penny gained," he was slow to appreciate in its true light. Yet for this, perhaps, there was a reason. Previous to his marriage, he had been in the habit of spending the evening, after business hours, with a club of young tradesmen and other acquaintances. Now, habit is the pettiest and the most imperious of all tyrants. Even with a pinch of snuff it can make you its slave. It renders you miserable, until you once more bend your knee before it. But, as I have said, habit, though an imperious, is a petty tyrant; and three weeks' resolution, though you will have struggles to encounter, will enable you to snap asunder the strongest chain that ever habit forged. I do not mean the habits, the seeds of which we acquire in infancy, and which grow with our growth and strengthen with our strength, and which, in fact, perform a part of our education (though we do not admit it) until they are set down as things belonging to or ingrafted in our natures; but I mean the habits which we acquire in after-life. And, as has been stated, Walter Kerr had acquired a habit of attending an evening club, of which he had been a member during the last year of his apprenticeship; and, from the period that he commenced business up to his marriage, and a few days after he had brought home his wife, he attended the club as usual. He was happy in the society of his young and fair wife; but still (as we say in the north), there was a "craiking" within him for something to make him perfectly happy, and that "craiking" was to attend the club as usual. Now, it was not a club in which the

either drank deep or sat late—for it was a regulation amongst them that no man should sit in the club-room after ten o'clock, or drink more than three glasses; but, although they had this wholesome regulation, they had no by-law against what many of them called "*adjournments*," or "*sederunts*," and at which, though out of the club-room, the three glasses frequently became six.

With regard to the "sederunts," however, Hannah had no cause to complain of her husband; for he never had been one of those who formed them. Neither did she murmur, or consider herself neglected, on account of his attending the club; for she reasoned with herself, that, after the cares, toils, and business of the day, he required some relaxation; and although her company might be more agreeable to him than any other, yet she knew that the beauty and the fragrance of a flower does not increase by for ever looking upon it, and on it only, but that our admiration of the flower increases, as we pass over the weeds which we behold around us. Yet, she thought that every night was too much—more than relaxation required; and she thought, also, that a shilling a-night was six shillings in the week (for let it not be thought that a club of which Walter Kerr was a member, met on the Sabbath), and that six shillings a-week was nearly sixteen pounds in the year—a sum that might frequently be of use when accounts became due, and money was difficult to get in. She therefore delicately and tenderly endeavoured to break her husband from the habit he had acquired; but she attempted it in vain. He believed himself to be one of the most frugal and industrious tradesmen in the town; and nothing but bringing the fact plainly and broadly before him seemed sufficient to convince him that there was aught of expensiveness in his habits. But his wife, more delicately and efficiently, did so convince him. They were talking together of many things, and their conversation lent wings to the short hours, when, an opportunity offering, she related to him an anecdote, which brought home to himself his nightly attendance at the club; and, as I know the story to be no allegory, nor child of the brain, but a fact, I shall relate it to you.

"In a town," said she, "not many miles south of the Border, there dwelt a man who was by trade a mechanic

and who was the father of seven children. For sixteen years he had never wanted employment (when he chose to work), and his earnings averaged from five-and-thirty shillings to two pounds a-week. But, with a number of associates, he was in the habit of attending, daily and nightly, what they termed their house of call. In the morning, as he went to his labour, he could not pass it without having what he called his '*nipper*,' or what some of the good people in Scotland call their '*morning*,' which, being interpreted, meaneth a glass of gin, rum, or whisky." (For gentle as Hannah was there was a sprinkling of the wag in her character). "At midday," she added, "he had to give it another call; and to pass it on returning from his work at night was out of the question. Sometimes, and not unfrequently, when he called in for his '*nipper*,' in the morning, he sat down—in a room which had two windows, looking east and west—and forgot to rise until, after he had seen from the one window the sun rising, he beheld it set from the other. But it was the force of habit—it had grown in upon him, as he said; and what could the poor man do? He beheld his wife broken-hearted, going almost in rags, and their affection had changed into bickerings and reproaches. His children, too, were half-starved, ill-clad, and unschooled; and for what education they got, he thought not of paying the schoolmaster—he felt nothing in hand for his money, and therefore could not see the force of the debt. But the poor man could not help it. It was true he earned about two pounds a-week, but which way the money went he could not tell. He did not, as he thought, deserve the reproaches of his wife. His 'morning' was only fourpence, his call at midday the same, and his evening pipe and glass a shilling or eighteenpence—that, he thought, was nothing for a man working so hard as he did; and when he did take a day now and then, he said that was not worth reckoning, for his clay could not keep together without moisture; and as for the glass or two which he took on a Sunday, why, they were not worth mentioning. Thus he could see no cause for the unhappiness of his wife, the poverty of his house, and the half-nakedness of his family. He had to 'do as other people did, or he might leave their society;' and he attributed all

to bad management somewhere, but not on his part. But one Sunday morning he had lingered in their house of call longer than his companions, and he was sitting there when the churchwardens and parish officers went their rounds, and came to the house. To conceal him from them there, and avoid the penalty—

"'Tom,' said the landlady, 'here be the wardens a-comin'. If they find thee here, lad, or meet thee goin' out, thou wilt be fined, and me too; and it may give my hoose a bad name. Coom up stairs, and I will show thee through the hoose, while they examine the tap and the parlour.'

"So saying, Tom the mechanic followed the hostess from room to room, wondering at what he saw; for the furniture, as he said to himself, was like a nobleman's, and he marvelled how such things could be; and while he did so, he contrasted the splendour he beheld around him with the poverty and wretchedness of his own garret. And, after showing him through several rooms, she at last, with a look of importance, ushered him into what she called *the drawing-room*—but, now-a-days, drawing-rooms have become as common as gooseberries, and every house with three rooms and a kitchen has one. Poor Tom the mechanic was amazed as he beheld the richly-coloured and fancy-figured carpet; he was afraid to tread on it—and indeed he was told to clean his feet well before he did so. But he was more astonished when he beheld a splendid mirror, with a brightly gilded and carved frame, which reached almost from the ceiling to the floor, and in which he beheld his person, covered with his worn-out and unholiday-like habiliments from top to toe, though they were his only suit. Yet more was he amazed, when the ostentatious mistress of the house, opening what appeared to him a door in the wall, displayed to him rows of shining silver plate. He raised his eyes, he lifted up his hands—'Lack! ma'am!' says he, 'how d'ye get all these mighty fine things?'

"And the landlady, laughing at his simplicity, said—'Why, lad, by fools' pennies to be sure.'

"But the words 'fools' pennies' touched his heart as if a sharp instrument had pierced it; and he thought unto himself, 'I am one of those fools; and he turned away and

left the house with the words written upon his conscience; and as he went he made a vow unto himself, that, until that day twelve months, he would neither enter the house he had left, nor any other house of a similar description—but that on that day twelvemonths he would visit it again. When he went home, his wife was surprised at his home-coming; for it was seldom he returned during the day. He had two shillings left; and taking them from his pocket, he gave them to one of his daughters, desiring her to go out and purchase a quartern loaf and a quantity of tea, sugar, and butter. His wife was silent from wonder. He took her hand and said—'Why, thou seemest to wonder at me, old lass; but I tell thee what—I have had a lesson this mornin' that I shan't forget; and when thou findest me throwing away even a penny again, I will give thee liberty to call me by any name thou likes.'

"His wife was astonished, and his family were astonished; and in the afternoon he took down the neglected and dust-covered Bible, and read a chapter aloud; though certainly not from any correct religious feeling. But he had formed the resolution to reform, and he had learned enough to know that reading his Bible was a necessary and excellent helper towards the accomplishment of his purpose. It was the happiest Sabbath his family had ever spent, and his wife said that even on her wedding Sunday she was not half so happy.

"But, the day twelve months from that on which he had seen the splendid furniture, the rich carpet, the gorgeous mirror, and the costly plate, arrived. It was a summer morning, and he requested his wife and children to dress before seven o'clock. During the last twelve months, his wife and his children had found it a pleasure to obey him, and they did so readily. He took the arm of his wife in his, and each of them led a younger child by the hand, while the elder walked hand in hand before them; and they went on until they came unto his former house of call; and standing opposite it, he said unto his wife—

"'Now, old woman, thou and the little ones will go in here with me for five minutes, and thou shalt see something that will please thee.'

"So they went into the house together, and Tom the me-

chanic found his old associates seated around the room, as he was wont to see them twelve months before, just as though they had been fixtures belonging to the establishment: and as he, with his wife and children entered, his former companions rose, and exclaimed in wonder—'Ha! Thomas! what wind has blown thee here?' For, though they called him merely *Tom* before, he had *Thomas* from them now. And, as the landlady entered and saw a well-dressed man and woman, with seven clean and well-dressed children around them, in her tap-room, she wondered exceedingly; for their appearance contrasted strangely with that of her other customers amongst whom they were seated.

"'Why, don't you know me, ma'am?" inquired Thomas, observing her look of curiosity and wonderment.

"'Why, I can hardly say as how I do, sir,' she replied, and yet I am sure I have seen you somewhere.'

"'That you have, ma'am,' answered he; 'I am your old customer, Tom Such-an-one.'

"'Lack me! is it possible! and so you are! Why, what a change there is upon thee! Thou art quite a gentleman turned. And is this lady thy wife, and these thy children? Well, now! how smart you have them all! How in the world do you manage it?'

"'O ma'am,' said Tom the mechanic, 'nothing in the world is more easy—the *fools' pennies* which I before gave to buy your fine carpets, your mirror, and your silver plate, *I now keep in my own pocket.*' So saying, he bowed to her, and wishing her good morning, with his wife's arm in his, they and their children left the house and returned home. Such," added Hannah, "is the true story of Tom the mechanic."

The anecdote told upon her husband; and when she had concluded, he arose and took her hand and said—

"You were right, love, the story of Tom the mechanic has convinced me that a penny saved is a penny gained: and I shall remember it."

Walter Kerr did remember it; and from that day he ceased his nightly visits to the club. The world prospered with him; and in a short time there was not a more thriving or a more respected merchant in the town of H—— than Walter Kerr. Every one began to say that he was greatly

indebted for his good fortune to the excellent management of his wife. Even his parents at length admitted that his marrying Hannah Jerdan was the most fortunate thing that ever their son Walter did: and he himself said that she had been worth to him her weight in gold.

They had two children. Their first-born was a boy, and his name Francis; and their daughter they had called Jacobini, after an only brother of Hannah's, and of whom nothing had been heard for many years. No poet in his waking dreams of domestic bliss hath pictured a happier pair than were Walter Kerr and his gentle Hannah. She was unto him as a guardian spirit, an affectionate counsellor, and a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. And as their children grew up in beauty before them, like fair flowers in spring, stealing day by day into loveliness, so grew their joy.

But, within eight years after his marriage an unbidden guest—who entereth alike the palace and the cottage, whose eye pierceth through the deepest gloom of the dungeon, as he smiteth the prisoner and saith, "There is no darkness like unto my darkness"—placed his noiseless foot upon the threshold of the prosperous merchant, and with his cold and poisoned finger touched the bosom of the wife and mother.

Walter Kerr beheld his young, his beautiful, and excellent wife laid upon her dying bed, with the last breath of life quivering on her lips. His agony was the wildness, the bitterness of despair. He hung over her, he wrung his hands, he smote them on his bosom, he wept. He was as one who hath no hope, and on whom misery--deep, desolating, everlasting misery—had fallen. He would not, he could not be comforted.

"My own! my own!" he exclaimed; "I cannot, cannot part with her!"

His was the extremeness of grief. An hour had arrived of the approach of which he had never thought, or if he had ever imagined that it would come, he had thought of it as belonging to a day that was far, far distant, and which might come when age would lead them together gently to the grave.

The young, the dying wife stretched forth her trembling and feeble hand; and as he raised it to his fevered lips—

"Weep not, dear Walter," she said, falteringly; "but, oh! when I am gone, be kind to my dear children. And should you——" she added, but her voice failed, and tears mingled with the cold dews of death upon her cheeks. But in a few moments she again added—"Walter, should you marry another, for my sake see that she be as a mother to our children."

"O Hannah!" he sobbed. Her words entered his agonised bosom like a barbed instrument, adding sorrow to sorrow, and pain to pain. He thought of her and of her only, and from the idea of another his soul revolted.

She called her children to her bedside, and she endeavoured to raise herself upon her elbow. She kissed them—she called them by their names—her last tears fell upon their cheeks and blended with theirs, and she bestowed upon them a dying mother's blessing. She took their little hands, and placing them in her husband's, gazed tenderly and imploringly on his face, and sinking back upon her pillow, with a deep sigh her gentle spirit sought the world which is beyond death.

It was a melancholy sight to behold Walter Kerr with his young son and almost infant daughter in his hands, standing weeping over their mother's grave, while the awful, the mortal words "ashes to ashes, dust to dust," were pronounced, and the sound of the cold red earth falling on the coffin rang rudely on his ears.

For many months there walked not on the earth a more sorrowful widower. His heart, his hopes, his joys, seemed buried in the grave of her who had been his wife. His sole consolation was in his children, and he doted over them with more than a father's fondness. But he was still a young man, he was yet a prosperous one, and he had obtained the reputation of being wealthy.

His wife had been dead somewhat more than four years, when there came to reside in H—— a fair and fashionable maiden, whose name was Harriet Scott. She soon obtained the reputation of being the greatest beauty in the town, and was the favourite and toast of every bachelor; amongst whom, if she did not conquer many hearts, she conquered many eyes; and if she had not lovers, she had manifold admirers. She was the daughter of an old military man,

a major, belonging to some royal veteran battalion. Beautiful she certainly was; but she was vain as beautiful; and her father's pay was all that stood between her and poverty.

There are but few men, and especially mercantile men, who are used to calculate and consider consequences, that are found guilty of the folly of offering their hand to a poor and fashionable woman. What fascination the gay and beautiful Miss Scott threw over our young and rich widower—

> "What dreams, what charms,
> What conjuration, or what mighty magic"—

I cannot tell. The gossips of H——, at their tea parties, said she had "set her cap" at him. But I am not much acquainted with the witchcraft of "setting a cap" or how much the term implies. This I know, that when Walter Kerr first saw Miss Harriet Scott, he thought, what every person said, "that she was very beautiful," though he also thought that she was a vain girl, conscious of her own attractions, and much too fond of dress and display. But, after he had seen her frequently and she spoke with him familiarly, and that, too, in a voice which was almost as sweet as her face was beautiful—and when he saw, or thought he saw, that she smiled on him more frequently and more sweetly than on any one else—he began to think that she was an interesting girl, and by no means the vain creature he had at first imagined her to be. It is dangerous when a man begins to think a woman interesting. As their acquaintance grew, he discovered that she had no vanity whatever.

"She is," thought he unto himself, "the fairest and gentlest being I have met with since —" "I laid my Hannah in the dust," he would have continued; but, as the thought arose in his bosom, a tear gathered in his eyes, a low sigh escaped from him, and a glow overspread his face.

Every day, however, the beautiful Miss Scott became more interesting in the eyes of the thriving merchant, and his wealth more and more attractive to her; and in an evil hour he offered her his hand, and with a sweet blush, like

the shadow of a rose leaf on a lily, the proposal was accepted.

His neighbours said, that if his first wife had enabled him to make a fortune, he had got one who would spend it now. And they had not been husband and wife many months, until events began to show there was some truth in what their neighbours said. The dress of Mrs. Kerr was gayer and far more costly than it had ever been as Miss Scott; though it was, from its extravagance, a subject of conversation, or what was called "a town's talk," then; and even Walter could not avoid contrasting, in his own mind, the showy and expensive attire of his living spouse with the plain and modest neatness of her who was not. She was kind enough to the children for a time; and she called them "the little creatures," and "Kerr's children." But she saw them seldom. "Not," she said, "that she disliked them, but that she could not be troubled with children being much about her."

She was not long, however, in beginning to hint that it was rather derogatory in a Major's daughter to have become the wife of a provincial shopkeeper. The smell of the goods, too, shocked her nerves, and injured her health.

"The smell from the shop hurt your nerves, dear!" said her husband—and the apartments they inhabitated were immediately over the shop and warehouse—"the smell from the shop hurt you," continued he—"that is very strange! My poor Hannah never complained of such a thing, and I'm sure many a hundred times has she stood in it from morning to night."

"Don't talk to me, sir, of your Hannah, if you please," added she; "if I threw myself away upon you, I was not to be insulted with odious comparisons about your Hannah."

"Odious, indeed!" thought Walter, with a sigh; but he durst not express what he thought; for before this he had begun to discover the inflammable materials which his wife's temper was made of.

"I tell you, Kerr," added she, "the effluvia from your shop is insupportable. It shocks my nerves continually—it is killing me altogether."

"Truly, my dear," rejoined he, "I am at a loss to under-

stand ye. Really every other person you meet talks about their nerves, and being nervous, now-a-days. But since I can remember, there were no such words in use—that is, as they are now applied. For, when we spoke of anything being nervous, we meant something that was strong and powerful, such as a nervous sermon, or a nervous speech in the House of Commons; and if we spoke of a man of nerve, it was a strong-bodied or a strong-minded man that we meant. But now-a-days the meaning is quite reversed; and when a person is spoken of as being nervous, or very nervous, it is always in reference to some silly, shaking body, that has no nerve at all. And it is my candid opinion, dear, that nobody in this country ever complained of being troubled with the nerves, until spirit-drinking and hot tea drinking came so much in vogue!"

"O you savage!—you barbarian!" screamed Mrs. Kerr, who seemed to have been struggling with a hysteric which now came upon her. We have seen people who have a convenient habit of assuming this pride-produced malady, and Mrs. Kerr was now trying the effect of the experiment upon her husband; and the violence of the pretended paroxysm increased as he manifested the more and more tenderness and anxiety to soothe her; and when she had caused him to believe that he had succeeded in restoring her to consciousness—"Kerr," said she, "we must, if you do not intend to kill me, leave this horrid house."

"Leave the house, dear!" said he in surprise—"where could we go?"

"Go!" she replied—"why don't you take or build a respectable house out of the town, where a person could receive their friends. You cannot expect any genteel person to call upon us here, to be suffocated with the fumes of your nasty shop and warehouse."

Walter was once more tempted to speak of his poor Hannah, and was about to say that the most genteel people in the town and neighbourhood had visited her, without once hinting that there was anything disagreeable to them arising from the proximity of the shop and warehouse, or from the mixed goods which they contained. But it is a common saying and a good one, that "second thoughts are best;" and Walter Kerr thought twice, and when he did so, he perceived

that to speak of his dear and buried Hannah again, to her who now was to him as she was, would only be throwing oil upon a flame. He forbore and was silent.

I think—and so perhaps many of my readers will think—that, though a shrewd man, he was of too complying a temper. He was ready to sacrifice too much for what is called *ease* and *peace*. But in so doing, he was only like many others, whom you will find ready to say—"Oh, we are willing to do anything for the sake of peace." And no doubt this is a very good spirit; but it may be carried too far. It is quite as possible for a man to be in error by enduring too much as by allowing too little. There is a middle path in everything; and it is always the safest, and generally the best. Extremes are always bad—so bad, indeed, that they are like two wild bulls running to encounter each other, and meeting on a common path, then thrust their horns into the forcheads of each other and thus forcibly and painfully become as one body, to the obstruction of the thoroughfare. But that Walter Kerr was too fond of yielding, will be proved from the circumstances of his having purchased a few acres of ground, and commenced the building of a country-house about three miles out of H——, within three months after the conversation which I have related between him and Mrs. Kerr took place.

Well, the house was finished, and a very neat, and I may say elegant looking house it was. They had a garden behind it. Immediately in front was a parterre tastefully laid out in plots; and between the parterre and the highway was a shrubbery, which, from the number of poplar and other rapid growing trees in it, was no doubt intended in a few years to have the designation of "a plantation" or "a wood." But, after the villa was built, Mrs. Kerr discovered that new furniture was necessary for their new house.

"In truth, Harriet, my dear," said Mr. Kerr, "I can in no way see that new furniture is necessary. Ye will consider it would be extremely expensive. All that we have is strong and durable; I can see no fault with it."

He would have added, "It was all of my Hannah's choosing;" but every day the power of Harriet, her fashionable successor, had increased; and, although Walter knew not

whence that power came, he was too conscious of its existence and he spoke not what he wished to have said.

To his last remarks, she replied—"O Kerr! Kerr! when shall I get you to forget your low-life shop and counter? Why did I marry a man that has no ideas beyond saying, 'Thank you—I am much obliged to you,' to every petty penny customer! And a man of your fortune, too!—Oh, meanness!—Kerr, I am ashamed of you."

He stood out for a considerable time; but "for the sake of peace," he had already yielded to building the villa; and what was once done, was more easily done again—therefore he agreed to fit it up with new furniture. The building and the furnishing of the house cost Mr. Kerr no small sum; and his name did not stand at the Bank as worthy of credit to the amount it once did. In his moments of solitude he thought of these things and sighed.

Yet this was not all, when they had taken possession of the house, and Mrs. Kerr had it, and the new and splendid furniture, with the garden, the parterre, and the shrubbery, there was something still wanting—and that was, a genteel *approach* to the house. Its present entrance was, as Mrs. Kerr said, "no better than a gate to a cow park—as vulgar as the abominable shop and warehouse; and enough to prevent any genteel person from coming near them. Indeed, she could not ask them while they had such an *approach*.

Yield once to a woman's caprice, and you may yield always. Two instances in which he yielded have been mentioned, and he yielded a third time.

"Now," thought he, "Harriet will surely be satisfied. I have built her a fine house, and fitted it up with fine furniture, and I have made her an avenue to it that an nobleman might enter. Oh, if my dear departed Hannah could look up, and see the folly into which I have been drawn, she would shake her head and say—'Walter! Walter!'—And well she might."

And as Walter Kerr thought thus, he burst into tears.

But his wife was not content. The house, the garden, the shrubbery, the parterre, and the approach, were not enough. She wanted her genteel friends about her, now that she was in a situation to receive them; and she brought them about

her. She treated them, she feasted them. They were there not only one day in the week, but every day, by dozens and by scores. Our unfortunate merchant became a cipher in his own house and at his own table. He had formerly thought what are called genteel people as rare sort of individuals, to be met with occasionally; but he now found them plentiful as gooseberries in August. They surrounded him like locusts. They were

"Thick as atumnal leaves in Vallambrosa."

And what surprised him most was, that, first one and then another said to him, during dinner (in accordance with the absurd practice which still prevails)—"Mr. Kerr, I shall be happy to drink a glass of wine with you." And scarce had he swallowed one glass (for he always took off his heel-taps), until another said the same thing, and another, and another, as though they had entered into concert to fire a regular *feu de joie* at his head; and he thought it a very hard thing that he could not take a glass of wine in his own house, without caring, or being told whether those who ate and drank at his expense, were happy at his drinking or not. Moreover, they acted as though they considered him honoured by their eating and drinking; and he saw their respect lavished on his genteel better half, while he was passed over as a sort of nobody. These were almost every-day doings, and he began to find that they were making fearful inroads on his cash account; in short, he discovered that if he had acquired a fortune rapidly during the life of his first wife, he was spending it as rapidly now.

One day, after a close examination into his books (and it was a very beautiful day, but there had been wet weather for some time before, and the roads were bad and disagreeable to walk upon), he returned home with the determination of saying unto his wife—"Harriet, it is impossible for me to stand the course of extravagance we are now pursuing. I shall be very happy to entertain your friends occasionally; but really this treating of them every week, I might almost say every day, is too much for any man in business to stand. Look at my profits and expenditure during the last three years." And he had a statement drawn out.

But, as I have said, this was only a speech which he intended to deliver in the presence of his wife. Scarce had he sat down in the parlour where she was, until he perceived, from her looks and manner, that there was a coming storm; and he knew that the address which he had prepared would be ill-timed. He therefore sat in silence; but she did not follow his example.

"Kerr," said she, "I don't know whether you mean to kill me, or what you mean to do; but I am kept here mewed up like a prisoner."

"Me keep you mewed up, dear!" said he; "ye certainly know that ye have full scope and liberty to do as ye please—ye are mistress of your own actions."

"Me mistress of my own actions!" exclaimed she; "me go where I please!—what do ye mean? *How* can I go anywhere? Would you have me to go wading through the mire to visit any respectable person?"

"Certainly not, my dear," said he; "but ye can take a fine day for your visits, when it is dry under foot."

"O you brute!" exclaimed the delicate Mrs. Kerr; "when shall I teach you to know anything? When shall I get your ideas carried beyond your counter? Is it not disgraceful to see you trudge, trudging into the town every day, like some poor beggar that had to work for his bread."

"Beggars dinna work, hinny," said he—"but do not be in a passion."

"Passion!" cried she; "I tell you what, Kerr—if you continue to disgrace me as you have done, I shall never set my foot on the outside of your threshold again. Why don't you get a carriage?"

"A carriage!" he exclaimed, as though a thunderbolt had startled him in its flight.

"Yes! a carriage," she resumed—"I ask you, why don't you get one? Don't tell me you can't afford it. I know better."

"I cannot tell what ye know, love," said Mr. Kerr; "but a carriage is out of the question."

"It is not out of the question," she resumed; "and question or no question, you must have one. Do you suppose I am to be kept here like a nun all my life?"

More conversation of a similar character passed between them; but it ended in this, that within two months Walter Kerr had a coachman, a carriage, and a pair of horses.

But in noticing the doings of the second Mrs. Kerr, I have overlooked the situation of the children of poor Hannah. I have seen stepmothers who have been as kind to the children entrusted to their care—I have thought even more so—than if they had been their own. But such, the reader will already have imagined, was not the treatment of the children of Hannah Jerdan. Within twelve months from their father's marriage, they became subjected to daily, almost hourly, scenes of cruel, petty, and capricious persecution.

But they endured their hard treatment and murmured not. In the society of each other they were happy—they spoke of their mother and wept. To Jacobini she was as a dream mother—like the "dream children" of poor matchless ELIA.

But Francis remembered his mother; and by that name he could never be brought to call her who had now taken her place. Mrs. Kerr, indeed, though she had no children of her own, was wont to say—

"Don't let *the creatures* call me mother."

Time had passed on until Francis was a boy, or perhaps, I should say a youth, of nearly fourteen, and Jacobini was approaching twelve. Now, it occurred, that, at the time I refer to, she had offended her stepmother, in what way I know not; but according to the statement of the latter, it was an every-day offence—although Jacobini was a gentle child, docile as her mother was. But Mrs. Kerr was in an evil humour; and after having caused her favourite serving-maid to beat the child in her presence, not satisfied with the punishment she had received, she began to chastise her herself.

The cries of little Jacobini reached the ears of her brother, who was amusing himself in the garden. Although generally a quiet, he was a bold and passionate boy. He rushed towards the house—he burst into the room where his stepmother was gratifying her cruelty and hatred on his helpless sister—he rushed forward.

"Woman!" he cried, in the manner of one whose

reason has left him, "if you strike my sister I will strike you?"

"Boy!" she exclaimed in a frenzy; and struck not only his sister again, but him too, and applied epithets to both, which, for the sake of human nature, it is as well not to repeat.

I have said that he was bold and passionate—he was also a tall and strong boy for his years. He grasped her more fiercely, and as she continued to vent her rage on both, and to strike at both, he dashed her to the floor, and exclaimed again—

"Woman! if you strike my sister I will strike you!"

At that moment his father entered the house. Hysterics again came to plead the cause of Mrs. Kerr. Walter had seen enough. He seized hold upon his son. He chastised him—unmercifully he did so; for he also, on occasions, was a man of violent passions; but, as with augmented rage he struck his son, the boy, while he submitted patiently to his chastisement, gazed in his face with a tearless and stern eye, and when he had exhausted his rage and strength, the boy turned on him and said—"Are you done, sir? I shall tell my mother this! MY mother!"

When Walter Kerr heard the words—"I shall tell *my mother*," and especially the words "MY mother," pronounced by his son, and the emphatic manner in which they were pronounced, he trembled—his heart filled—he burst into tears, and stretching out his hand, he said—"Francis!"

But the boy exclaimed—"No!" refused the offered hand, and rushed out of the room.

Throughout the day he was not again seen; and after many days of diligent search after him had been made, it was ascertained that he had entered on board of a foreign trading vessel from Newcastle. Twelve months passed, and the vessel again arrived in Newcastle; but the captain stated that the astonishing boy (as he termed Francis) had left him, he knew not for why, nor for where, while they were upon the coast of Africa, where many vessels were.

The tidings fell sadly on the heart of Walter Kerr; but he had other evils to contend with. He had lost his son;

and with his villa, his grounds, his carriage, and his visitors, he had lost the half of his fortune. But the ambition of Mrs. Kerr was not yet satisfied. Her husband did not possess landed property sufficient to think of being a Justice of the Peace for the county; yet she thought it would give her additional importance were he chief magistrate in the town of H——. I will not say that Mr. Kerr had not a sprinkling of ambition in his composition himself, and he more readily agreed that he should aspire to the honour of being elevated to the bench, than to any other whim that she had proposed to him. Therefore, after bestowing the necessary and customary (though illegal) fees on the corporators, which made another fearful inroad on his monied property, Mr. Kerr had the honour and gratification of being elected chief magistrate of the town of H——.

"Now," thought he, "Harriet will surely have reached the height of her ambition; she will be content now."

But he was mistaken. She not only discovered that the idea of a magistrate standing behind a counter, and working amongst bales of goods, or casks of sundry liquors, was intolerable, but she declared that the effluvia which he brought with him from his warehouse on his hands and garments, was quite as obnoxious as though she still lived over it. And further, she added, that you might as well attempt to wash the Ethiopian white as to wash it away. It rendered her incapable of taking her dinner every day.

Once again, Walter Kerr gave way, "for the sake of peace." He gave a share in his business to a shopman who had been with him for many years, and became a sleeping partner himself. Jacobini was a lovely girl of seventeen; but her persecution had increased with her years, until it became insupportable. She was treated not only as a servant, but as a slave. Her father beheld what she endured, and he thought of the dying injunction of his Hannah, and sighed; but his interposition tended only to increase the sufferings which his daughter endured.

Jacobini possessed all the meekness and patience which had characterised her mother; but she was persecuted beyond their endurance. She tied up a few of her clothes, the plainest that she had, and with the little money which she had been enabled to gather together, she left her father's house

at the dead of night, and wandering towards the next town, took her journey to London, where, through the instrumentality of a friend of her mother's, she was in a few days hired as child's-maid to a merchant in the city.

Her gentle disposition and acquirements soon rendered her a favourite with the family; and when they ascertained her history, she became as one of them.

About this time there was a young man, one William Jerdan, came from India to be initiated in the mysteries of business by her master. It was soon evident that he was no uninterested beholder of the gentleness and beauty of Jacobini. There was, perhaps, something of the ardent temperament of the clime in which he was born in his composition; and he suddenly made a declaration of his affection with an enthusiasm which, while it perhaps pleased, at the same time intimidated the retiring and the timid Jacobini. She therefore listened not to his words, and sought to avoid him. But the more her reserve grew, and the more she endeavoured to shun his presence, the more earnest became his entreaties, and the more ardent his declarations of affection. Thus several months passed, and there was a whisper in her heart that she could love him, that she *did* love him; but she endeavoured to conquer it. She had often corresponded with her brother, and given him an account of all that she had endured since the day of his departure. He was now commander of a large vessel trading between India and the States of America. She had written to him on the day after her arrival in London; and about eight months afterwards received from him the following letter. It was addressed to the care of the friend who had procured her the situation:—

"*New York, August 15th*, 18—

"My Dear Sister,—I cannot describe to you what were my feelings on receiving your letter, which communicated to me the tidings that you also had been forced to flee from our father's house. It is perhaps sinful in me to do so, but I cannot avoid hating the woman whom our father would have us to call mother; not on account of her conduct to me (though it was cruel enough), for I always despised her—but, O Jacobini, it was because she was so unlike *our* mother,

whom I remember better than you can, and whom I suppose you will now resemble as she lives in my memory—for all who saw you said, you 'were her picture;' but it is because of her cruelty to you that I hate her. The thought that you have been compelled to fly more than three hundred miles from our father's house, and that your only hope is becoming the servant of our equals! Sister, when I received your letter and read this, it cost me a sleepless night—I cried like a child—and sailors do not shed tears for trifles.

"Yea, though I am no Catholic, I prayed that *our* mother's spirit might watch over you and protect you, my sister! But I cannot endure the thought of your being a menial in the house of any one. With this, therefore, you will receive a draft for £100 upon the agents of my owners, payable at sight. The moment that you get it cashed, leave service, or I shall be angry.

"But now, my own sister, I have something else to tell you of. You know that our dear mother had a brother called James, and after whom you were named. He went to sea when but a boy, and was not again heard of. It was rumoured and believed, that he and his shipmates were taken by pirates, and that they became a part of them. The story was not true. Eighteen months ago, I was in Bengal, and had dealings with a merchant, who, hearing the Scottish, or rather the Border accent on my tongue, asked me from whence I came. I informed him; and he then, with a degree of curiosity, inquired who was my father, who my mother. When I spoke of our father—'I remember him well,' he said; 'Wat Kerr—why, he was my school and class-fellow!' but when I told him of our mother and who she was, there was a visible paleness on his sunburnt face; sweat stood in drops upon his brow, he gasped in his eagerness to hear me, and exclaimed—'Youth! youth! does your mother live?' 'Oh, no!' I answered; and the tears gushed into my eyes, sister. 'Come to me! come to me! my sister's child!' he cried, and he threw his arms around my neck. Jacobini, it was our uncle—our mother's brother. And when I had told him all, and how and why I had left the house, and spoke of you, and of your being named after him—'If I live,' said he, 'for two years more,

I shall see my little niece, my namesake—she shall be my daughter. He had been many years a prisoner, and on obtaining his liberty became a sort of secretary to a nabob in India. He had written repeatedly to his parents; but he received no answer, for ere then they were dead; and his sister — our mother — he knew not whether she lived, where she was, or by what name she might be found. He is now a widower, and has an only son, nearly my age. Our cousin, Jacobini, is a noble, kind-hearted fellow. I should have loved him though he had been no relative of mine, from the moment I became acquainted with him. His name is William, and before this reaches you, he will be in London where you are; for, when I last left Bengal, he was preparing to go to London, to be thoroughly instructed in the rules of business. He was to be in the house of one Mr. L——, in Throgmorton Street. By inquiring there you will easily find him; and the moment you receive this, call upon him—he will rejoice in having found you—he will protect you until I see you, which will be in the course of next year; for, after again going to Bengal, I have a voyage to make to England; and our uncle has promised to accompany me. Therefore, within twelve months, we shall meet again. Remember me to my cousin when you find him, which you will easily do. You may show him this letter; and when he has seen it, I am sure you will find in him a warm and steadfast friend, and one who will not endure the degradation of your remaining an hour in a state of servitude.

"Farewell, dear and only sister, until we meet; and if you ever hear from our father, tell him that I yet live, that I think of him and love him—but oh, Jacobini! the *woman* that rules his house, renders it impossible that I can again enter it. Write to him that I shall meet him in London next year, but he must not bring *her*. Again, farewell, dear sister—wait upon our cousin with this letter; it will be an agreeable surprise—and I am, ever, your affectionate brother,

"Francis Kerr."

Such was the letter which Jacobini received from her brother. But it would be a vain task to describe her feelings

on its perusal. From it she found that her lover and cousin —he whom she *did* love, though she showed it not, and whom she sought to avoid—was one and the same person. She was commanded to show the letter to *him!*

"To *him!*" said Jacobini; "I cannot." And yet while she so said she wept with joy. She went not to him—nor needed she; for, as was his wont, within an hour he threw himself in her way — for he watched her every movement. She had never spoken to him unkindly (for it was not in her nature), but always coldly. She had the letter in her hand, and she was weeping over it when he saw her.

"Why does my Jacobini weep?" said he; "if aught distresses her why refuse the friendship and the hand of one who is ready to bear your sorrows and protect you?"

"William," she said, falteringly—and it was the first time she had called him by that name—"read, read this." And she put the letter into his hands.

He took it—his eyes glanced eagerly over it; but before he had finished it, he flung his arms round her neck, and exclaimed—"My cousin!—my Jacobini!—mine!"

Her face fell upon his bosom, and she wept. Few words were spoken between them; but they understood each other. He took her hand in his, and still holding the letter, he led her to the room of her master and his mercantile instructor. They were both in tears as they approached him.

"Master William," said the merchant, with a look of surprise, "what's the meaning of this?"

William put the letter which his fair cousin had received into his hands. The merchant perused it.

"Miss Kerr," said he, "I am sorry that I was not sooner acquainted with your history. If you will, you shall still remain in my house, as a friend, but not as a menial. My opinion of your cousin William, though I say it before him, agrees with your brother's. Whatever his faults are, they belong to his head, not to his heart, and a little experience will correct them. I believe I have seen more between you, at least, on his part, Jacobini, than your brother knows. But hitherto, while I discouraged, I was not displeased at the affection which I saw my young *protegé* manifested towards you. And when my friend, your uncle and his father," (for

he spoke to Jacobini), "arrives in England, I shall rejoice not only in being able to introduce to him his niece, but in recommending a daughter."

As the merchant spoke, William and Jacobini hung their heads, and tears and blushes were on their cheeks together.

She remained in the house; and I need hardly say, that her cousin now looked upon her as his betrothed; and in the same manner did she regard him.

Before twelve months went round, her brother and her uncle arrived in London. It would be a vain task in me to picture their interview—to describe their joy—to pourtray their surprise. The reader will imagine it more vividly. Why should I tell how the brother wept upon the neck of his sister, and how her tears fell on his bosom; or how the merchant drew her uncle aside, and in a few words told him the affection that existed between his son and his niece, and of the worth of both. Nor need I tell how James Jerdan, after listening to the merchant, came forward with a full heart, and in one hand taking the hand of his niece, and in the other that of his son, joined them, saying—"Bless my children!"

Within a month, the indissoluble knot was tied between William and Jacobini, and they went down to Scotland to spend their honeymoon, her brother accompanying them; but her father-in-law refused to go with them, as he thought his presence might not be acceptable to her who was now the wife of his late sister's husband.

Jacobini had never heard from her father, though she had often written to him since she left his house. But from the day that she departed, ruin followed fast upon him. When he left his business because his wife was ashamed of it, business became ashamed of him. Her extravagance increased, and his property decreased. His villa, his carriage, his all that never should have belonged to him, became a jest among his neighbours. He was declared a bankrupt—he was cast into prison. The villa and the surrounding grounds were sold, the carriage was sold, and his wife went to reside with her father, who was then upon his death-bed.

When Jacobini, her husband, and her brother, arrived in H——, they found their father a captive in a prison.

house. They entered the prison to see him; and when he beheld them, he knew only his daughter. But they all, they each embraced him; they called him "FATHER!" and the poor man wept, even as a child weeps. He spoke of their mother—he entreated their forgiveness, but his son and his daughter clung around his neck, and cried—"Say nothing, father!"

They sent for his solicitor. His son and his son-in-law paid his debts in the prison. They led him out in their arms. They sent for his wife, the gay Miss Scott, that was their cruel stepmother; her father had died about a week before; and she was left destitute, having ruined her husband.

"I will support my father," said Francis; "but I will have nothing to do with maintaining *that woman*"—for she had been sent for against his wish.

"Then I will support her," said Jacobini—"William, will not you?" she added, addressing her husband. "Let bygones be bygones—she is my father's wife—she must have cared for me before I could have cared for myself."

"Yes, love, yes, we will support her," said her husband.

They did as they had said. Walter Kerr lived in comfort on an annuity which his children allowed him; and his wife, while she partook of it, repented because of her extravagance, and because of her cruelty to those from whose bounty she was now fed. Jacobini went with her husband and her father-in-law to India, where in a few years a happy family gamboled around them, and Francis increased in wealth, but lived a bachelor, and left his property to his sister's children.

THE TWIN BROTHERS.

WILLIAM SIM was the son of a feuar in the southern part of Dumfriesshire, who by dint of frugality had hoarded together from three to four hundred pounds. This sum he was resolved to employ in setting up his son in business; and in pursuance of this resolution, at the age of fourteen, William was bound as an apprentice to a wealthy old grocer in Carlisle; and it was his fortune in a few months to ingratiate himself into the favour and confidence of his master. The grocer had a daughter, who, though not remarkable for the beauty of her face or the elegance of her person, had nevertheless an agreeable countenance and ten thousand independent charms to render it more agreeable. She was some eighteen months older than William; and when he first came to be an apprentice with her father, and a boarder in his house, she looked upon him as quite a boy, while she considered herself to be a full-grown woman. He was, indeed, a mere boy—and a clownish-looking boy too. He wore a black leathern cap, edged and corded with red, which his mother called a *bendy;* a coarse grey jacket; a waistcoat of the same; and his trousers were of a brownish-green cord, termed *thickset.* His shoes were of the double-soled description, which ought more properly to be called brogues; and into them, on the evening previous to his departure, his father had driven tackets and sparables innumerable, until they became like a plate of iron, or a piece of warlike workmanship, resembling the scaled cuirass of a mailed knight in the olden time; "for," said he, "the callant will hae runnin' about on the causeway and plainstanes o' Carlisle, sufficient to drive a' the shoon in the world aff his feet."

When, therefore, William Sim made his debut behind the counter of Mr. Carnaby, the rich grocer of Carlisle, and as he ran on a message through the streets, with his bendy cap, grey jacket, thickset trousers, and ironed shoes, striking fire behind him as he ran, and making a noise like a troop of cavalry, the sprucer youngsters of the city said he was "new caught." But William Sim had not been two years in Carlisle when he began to show his shirt collar; his clattering brogues gave place to silent pumps, his leathern bendy to a fashionable hat, and his coarse grey jacket to a coat with tails. Moreover he began to bow and smile to the ladies when they entered the shop; he also became quite a connoisseur in teas and confections; he recommended them to them, and he bowed and smiled again as they left. Such was the work of less than two years; and before three went round, there was not a smarter or a better dressed youth in all Carlisle than William Sim. He became a favourite subject of conversation amongst the young belles; and there was not one of them, who, if disengaged, would have said to him—"Get thee behind me." Miss Carnaby heard the conversation of her young companions, and she gradually became conscious that William was not a boy; in fact, she began to wonder how she had ever thought so, for he, as she said unto herself, "was certainly a very interesting *young man*." Within other four years, and before the period of his apprenticeship had expired, William began to repeat poetry—some said to write it, but that was not the fact; he only twisted or altered a few words now and then to suit the occasion; and almost every line ended with words of such soft sounds as bliss, kiss—love, dove—joy, cloy—and others equally sweet—the delightful meanings of which are only to be met with in the sentimental glossary. He now gave Miss Carnaby his arm to church; and, on leaving it in the afternoons, they often walked into the fields together. On such occasions,

"Talk of various kinds deceived the road,"

and even when they were silent, their silence had an eloquence of its own. One day they had wandered farther than their wont, and they stood on the little bridge where the two kingdoms meet, about half a mile below Gretna.

I know not what soft persuasion he employed, but she accompanied him up the hill which leadeth through the village of Springfield, and they went towards the far-famed Green together. In less than an hour, Miss Carnaby that was, returned towards Carlisle as Mrs. Sim, leaning affectionately on her husband's arm.

When the old grocer heard of what had taken place, he was exceedingly wroth; and although, as has been said, William stood high in his favour, he thus addressed him—

"Ay, ay, sir!—fine doings! This comes of your Sunday walking! And I suppose you say that my daughter is yours, —that she is your wife; and *she* may be *yours*—but I'll let you know, sir, my *money* is *mine;* and I'll cut you both off. You shan't have a sixpence. I'll rather build a church, sir—I'll give it towards paying off the national debt, you rascal. You would steal my daughter—eh?"

Thus spoke Mr. Carnaby in his wrath; but when the effervescence of his indignation had subsided, he extended to both the hand of forgiveness, and resigned his business in favour of his son-in-law.

Mr. William Sim, therefore, began the world under the most favourable circumstances. He found a fortune prepared to his hands—he had only to improve it. In a few years the old grocer died; and he bequeathed to them the gains of half a century. For twenty years Mr. Sim continued in business, and he had nearly doubled the fortune which he had obtained with his wife. Mrs. Sim was a kind-hearted woman; but by nature, or through education, she had also a considerable portion of vanity; and she began to think that it was the duty of her opulent husband to retire from business and assume the character of an independent gentleman; or rather I ought to say, of a country gentleman—a squire. She professed to be the more anxious that he should do this on account of the health of their daughter—the sole survivor of five children—and who was then entering upon womanhood. Maria Sim (for such was their daughter's name) was a delicate and accomplished girl of seventeen. The lovely hue that dwelt upon her cheeks like the blush of a rainbow, was an emblem of beauty, not of health. At the solicitations of her mother, her father gave up

his business and purchased a neat villa and a few acres that surrounded it, in the neighbourhood of Windermere. The house lay in the bosom of poetry, and the winds that shouted like a triumphant army through the mountain glens, or in gentle zephyrs sighed upon the lake, and gamboled with the ripples, made music around it.

The change, the beauty, I had almost said the deliciousness of their place of abode, had effected a wondrous improvement in the health of Maria; yet her mother was not happy. She was not treated by her neighbours with the obsequious reverence which she believed to be due to persons possessed of twenty thousand pounds. The fashionable ladies in the neighbourhood, also called her "a mean person"—"a nobody"—"an upstart of yesterday." In truth there was not a few who so spoke because they envied the wealth of the Sims, and were resolved to humble them.

An opportunity for them to do so soon occurred. A subscription ball or assembly, patronised by all the fashionables in the district, was to take place at Keswick. Mrs. Sim, in some measure from a desire of display, and also as she said, to bring out Maria, put down her husband's name, her own, and their daughter's, on the list. Many of the personages above referred to, on seeing the names of the Sim family on the subscription paper, turned upon their heel, and exclaimed —"Shocking!"

But the important evening arrived. Mrs. Sim had ordered a superb dress from London expressly for the occasion. A duchess might have worn it at a drawing room. The dress of Maria was simplicity typified, and consisted of a frock of the finest and the whitest muslin; while her slender waist was girdled with a lavender ribbon, her raven hair descended down her snowy neck in ringlets, and around her head she wore a wreath of roses.

When Mr. Sim, with his wife and daughter entered the room, there was a stare of wonderment amongst the company. No one spoke to them, no one bowed to them. The spirit of dumbness seemed to have smitten the assembly. But a general whispering, like the hissing of a congregation of adders, succeeded the silence. Then at the head of the room, the voices of women rose sharp, angry, and loud. Six or eight who appeared as the representatives of the company,

were in earnest and excited conversation with the stewards; and the words "low people!"—"vulgar!"—"not to be borne!"—"cheese! faugh!"—"impertinence!"—"must be humble!"—became audible throughout the room. One of the stewards, a Mr. Morris of Morris House, approached Mr. Sim and said—

"You, sir, are Mr. Sim, I believe, late grocer and cheesemonger in Carlisle?"

"I suppose, sir," replied the other, "you know that without me telling you—if you do not, you have some right to know me."

"Well, sir," continued the steward of the assembly, "I come to inform you that you have made a mistake. This is not a *social dance* amongst *tradesmen*, but an *assembly* of *ladies* and *gentlemen;* therefore, sir, your presence cannot be allowed here."

Poor Maria became blind, the hundred different headdresses seemed to float around her. She clung to her father's arm for support. Her mother was in an agony of indignation.

"Sir," said Mr. Sim, "I don't know what you call *gentlemen*, but if it be not *genteel* to have sold teas and groceries, it is at least more *honourable* than to use them and never pay for them. You will remember, sir, there is five hundred pounds standing against you in my books, and if the money be not paid to me to-night, you shall have less space to dance in before morning."

"Insolent barbarian!" exclaimed Squire Morris, stamping his foot upon the floor.

Mrs. Sim screamed—Maria's head fell upon her father's shoulder. A dozen gentlemen approached to the support of the steward; and one of them waving his hand and addressing Mr. Sim, said—"Away, sir!"

The retired merchant bowed and withdrew, not in confusion, but with a smile of malignant triumph. He strove to soothe his wife—for his daughter when relieved from the presence of the disdainful eyes that gazed on her bore the insult that had been offered them meekly—and after remaining an hour in Keswick, they returned to their villa in the same chaise in which they had arrived.

In the assembly room the dance began, and fairy forms

glided through the floor, lightly, silently, as a falling blossom embraceth the earth. Mr. Morris was leading down a dance when a noise was heard at the door. Some person insisted on being admitted, and the door-keepers resisted him. But the intruder carried with him a small staff, on the one end of which was a brass crown, and on its side the letters G. R. It was a talisman potent as the wand of a magician; the door-keepers became powerless before it. The intruder entered the room—he passed through the mazes of the whirling dance—he approached Mr. Morris—he touched him on the shoulder—he put a piece of paper in his hand—he whispered in his ear—

"You are my prisoner!—come with me!"

His lady and his daughters were present, and they felt most bitterly the indignity which a low tradesman had offered them. Confusion paralysed them; they stood still in the middle of the dance, and one of the young ladies swooned away and fell upon the ground. The time, the place, the manner of the arrest, all bespoke malignant and premeditated insult.

Mr. Morris gnashed his teeth together, but without speaking accompanied the officer that had arrested him in the room. He remained in custody in an adjoining inn throughout the night; on the following day he was released on bail; and within a week, his solicitor paid the debt by augmenting the mortgage on Morris House estate.

It is hardly necessary to say (for such is human nature) that after this incident, the hatred between Mr. Sim and Squire Morris became inveterate; and the wives of both, and the daughters of the latter, partook in the relentless animosity. Two years passed and every day the mutual hatred and contempt in which they held each other increased. At that period a younger son of Squire Morris, who was a lieutenant in the service of the East India Company, obtained leave to visit England and his friends. It was early in June; the swallows chased each other in sport, twittering as they flew over the blue bosom of Windermere. Every bush, every tree—yea, it seemed as if every branch sent forth the music of singing birds, and the very air was redolent with melody, from the bold songs of the thrush and the lark

to the love note of the wood pigeon; and even the earth rejoiced in the chirp of the grasshopper—its tiny but pleasant musician. The fields and the leaves were in the loveliness and freshness of youth, luxuriating in the sunbeams, in the depth of their summer green; and the butterfly sported, and the bee pursued its errand from flower to flower. The mighty mountains circled the scene, and threw their dun shadow on the lake, where, a thousand fathom deep, they seemed a bronzed and inverted world. At this time, Maria Sim was sailing upon the lake in a small boat that her father had purchased for her, and which was guided by a boy.

A sudden, but not what could be called a strong breeze came away. The boy had little strength and less skill, and from his awkwardness in shifting the sail, he caused the boat to overset. Maria was immersed in the lake. The boy clung to the boat, but terror deprived him of ability to render her assistance. She struggled with the waters, and her garments bore her partially up for a time. A boat, in which was a young gentleman, had been sailing to and fro, and at the time the accident occurred, was within three hundred yards of her. On hearing her sudden cry, and the continued screams of the boy, he drew in his sail, and taking the oars, at his utmost strength pulled to her assistance. Almost at every third stroke he turned round his head to see the progress he had made, or if he had yet reached her. Twice he beheld her disappear beneath the water—a third time she rose to the surface—he was within a few yards of her. He sprang from his boat. She was again sinking. He dived after her, he raised her beneath his arm and succeeded in placing her in his boat—he also rescued the boy and conveyed them both to land.

Maria, though for a time speechless, was speedily, through the exertions of her deliverer, restored to consciousness. Even before she was capable of thanking him or of speaking to him—yea, before her eyes had opened to meet his—he had gazed with admiration on her beautiful features, which were lovely, though the shadow of death was then over them, almost its hand upon them. In truth he had never gazed upon a fairer face, and when she spoke he had never listened to a sweeter or a gentler voice. He had been beneath an

Indian sun, where the impulses of the heart are fervid as the clime, and where, when the sun is gazed upon, its influence is acknowledged. But had she been less beautiful than she was, and her features less lovely to look upon, there was a strong something in the very manner and accident of their being brought into each other's society, which appealed more powerfully to the heart than beauty could. It, at least, begot an interest in the fate of each other; and an interest so called, is never very widely separated from affection. The individual who had saved Maria's life was Lieutenant Morris.

He conveyed her first to a peasant's cottage, and afterwards to her father's villa. He knew nothing of the feeling of hatred that existed between their families; and when Mr. Sim heard his name, though for a moment it caused a glow to pass over his face, every other emotion was speedily swallowed up in gratitude towards the deliverer of his child; and when Maria was sufficiently recovered to thank him, though she knew him to be the son of her father's enemy, it was with tears too deep for words—tears that told what eloquence would have failed to express. Even Mrs. Sim, for the time, forgot her hatred of the parents in her obligations to the son.

When, however, the young lieutenant returned to Morris House and made mention of the adventure in which he had been engaged, and spoke at the same time, in the ardour of youthful admiration, of the beauty and gentleness of the fair being he had rescued from untimely death, the cheeks of his sisters became pale, their eyeballs distended as if with horror. The word "wretch!" escaped from his mother's lips, and she seemed struggling with smothered rage. He turned towards his father for an explanation of the change that had so suddenly come over the behaviour of his mother and sisters.

"Son!" said the squire, "I had rather thou hadst perished than that a son of mine should have put forth his hand to assist a dog of the man whose daughter thou hast saved!"

On being made acquainted with the cause of the detestation that existed between the two families, Lieutenant Morris, in some degree, yielded to the whisperings of wounded pride, and began to regret that he had entered the house of

a man who had offered an indignity to his father that was not to be forgiven. But he thought also of the beauty of Maria, of the sweetness of her smile, and of the tears of voiceless gratitude which he had seen bedimming the lustre of her bright eyes.

He had promised to call again at her father's on the day after the accident; and with an ardent kindliness Mr. Sim had welcomed him to do so. But he went forth, he wandered by the side of the lake, he approached within sight of the house, there was a contention of strange feelings in his breast, and he returned without paying his promised visit. Nevertheless thoughts of Maria haunted him, and her image mingled with all his fancies. She became as a spirit in his memory that he could not expel, and that he would not if he could.

Three weeks passed on—it was evening—the sun was sinking behind the mountains, and Lieutenant Morris was wandering through a wooded vale towards Mr. Sim's mansion; for, though he entered it not, he nightly drew towards it, as if instinctively, wandering around it, and gazing on its windows as he did so, marvelling as he gazed. He was absorbed in one of those dreamy reveries in which men saunter, speak and muse unconsciously, when, in following the windings of a footpath which led through a thicket, he suddenly found himself in the presence of a young lady, who was walking slowly across the wood with a book in her hand. Their eyes met—they startled—the book dropped by her side —it was Maria.

I must not, however, dwell longer on this part of the subject; for the story of the twin brothers is yet to begin. Let it be sufficient to say, that William, or, as I have hitherto called him, Lieutenant Morris, and Maria whom he saved, became attached to each other. Their dispositions were similar—they seemed formed for each other. Affection took deep root in their heart, and to root up that affection in the breast of either was to destroy the heart itself. He made known his attachment towards Maria to his father; and galled pride and hatred to those who had injured him being stronger in the breast of the old squire than the small still voice of affection, he spurned his son from him, and ordered him to leave his house for ever. E

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The parents of Maria, notwithstanding their first feelings of gratitude towards the saviour of their daughter, were equally averse to a union between them; but with Maria the impulse of the heart and the lover's passionate prayer prevailed over her parents' frowns. They were wed, they became all to each other, and were disowned by those who gave them birth.

When Lieutenant Morris left India, he obtained permission to remain in England for three years; and it was about twelve months after his arrival that the marriage between him and Maria took place. He had still two years to spend in his native land, and he hired a secluded and neat cottage on the banks of the Annan for that period, for the residence of himself and his young and beautiful wife.

Twelve months after their marriage, Maria became the mother of twins—the twin brothers of our tale. But three months had not passed, nor had her infants raised their first smile towards their mother's face, when the sterile hand of death touched the bosom that supplied them with life. The young husband wept by the bed of death with the hand of her he loved in his.

"William!" said the gentle Maria—and they were her dying words, for she spoke not again—"my eyes will not behold another sun! I must leave you, love! O my husband! I must leave our poor, our helpless infants! It is hard to die thus! But when I am gone, dearest—when my babes have no mother—oh, go to *my mother*, and tell her—tell her, William—that it was the dying request of her Maria, that she would be as a mother to them. Farewell, love!—farewell! If—"

Emotion and the strugglings of death overpowered her—her speech failed—her eyes became fixed—her soul passed away, and the husband sat in stupefaction and in agony, holding the hand of his dead wife to his breast. He became conscious that she stirred not—that she breathed not—oh! that she was not! and the wail of the distracted widower rang suddenly and wildly through the cottage, startling his infants from their slumber, and, as some who stood around the bed said, causing even the features of the dead to move, as though the departed spirit had lingered, casting a farewell glance upon the body, and passed over

it again, as the voice it had loved to hear rose loud in agony.

The father of Maria came and attended her body to its last, long resting-place. But he did no more; and he left the churchyard without acknowledging that he perceived his grief-stricken son-in-law.

In a few months it was necessary for Lieutenant Morris to return to India, and he could not take his motherless and tender infants thither. He wrote to the parents of his departed Maria; he told them of her last request, breathed by her last words; he implored them, as they had once loved her, during his absence to protect his children.

But the hatred between Mr. Sim and Squire Morris had in no degree abated. The former would have listened to his daughter's prayer, and taken her twins and the nurse into his house; but his wife was less susceptible to the influence of natural feeling, and even, while at intervals she wept for poor Maria, she said—

"Take both of them, indeed! No! no! I loved our poor, thoughtless, disobedient Maria, Mr. Sim, as well as you did, but I will not submit to the Morrises. They have nothing to give the children—we have. But they have the same, they have a greater right to provide for them than we have. They shall take one of them, or none of them come into this house." And again she broke into lamentations over the memory of Maria, and in the midst of her mourning, exclaimed—"but the child that we take shall never be called Morris."

Mr. Sim wrote an answer to his son-in-law, as cold and formal as if it had been a note added to an invoice—colder, indeed, for it had no equivalent to the poor, hacknied phrase in all such, of "*esteemed favours.*" In it he stated that he would "bring up" one of the children, provided that Squire Morris would undertake the charge of the other. The unhappy father clasped his hands together on perusing the letter, and exclaimed—

"Must my poor babes be parted?—shall they be brought up to hate each other? O Maria! would that I had died with you, and our children also!"

To take them to India with him, where a war was threatened, was impossible, and his heart revolted from the thought

of leaving them in this country with strangers. At times he was seen with an infant son on each arm, sitting over the stone upon the grave of their mother which he had reared to her memory, kissing their cheeks and weeping over them, while they smiled in his face unconsciously, and offered to him, in those smiles, affection's first innocent tribute. On such occasions, their nurse stood gazing on the scene, wondering at her master's grief.

Morris, of Morris House, reluctantly consented to take one of his grandchildren under his care; but, at the same time, he refused to see his son previous to his departure.

The widowed father wept over his twin sons, and invoked a blessing on them, saw their little arms sundered, and each conveyed to the houses of those who had undertaken to be their protectors, while he again proceeded towards India. The names of the twins were George and Charles; the former was committed to the care of Mr. Morris, the other to Mr. Sim. Yet it seemed as if these innocent pledges of a family union, instead of destroying, strengthened the deep-rooted animosity that existed between them. Not a month passed that they did not, in some way, manifest their hatred of, and their persecution towards each other.

The Squire exhibited a proof of his vindictiveness, in not permitting the child of his son to remain beneath his roof. He had a small property in Devonshire, which was rented by an individual, who, with his wife, had been servants under his father. To them George Morris, one of the infant sons of poor Maria, before he was yet twelvemonths old, was sent, with an injunction that he should be brought up as their own son, that he should be taught to consider himself as such, and bear their name.

The boy Charles, whose lot it was to be placed under the protection of his mother's parents, was more fortunate. The love they had borne towards Maria they now lavished upon him. They called him by their own name—they spoke of him as their heir, as their *sole* heir, and they inquired not after his brother. That brother became included in the hatred which Mrs. Sim, at least, bore to his father's family. As he grew up, his father's name was not mentioned in his presence. He was taught to call his grandfather

—father; and his grandmother—mother; and withal, his mother, so called, instilled into his earliest thoughts an abhorrence of the inmates of Morris House. At times, his grandfather whispered to her on such occasions—"Do not do the like of that, dear—we know not how it may end." But she regarded not his admonitions, and she strove that her grandchild should hold the very name of Morris in hatred.

The peasants to whose keeping George was confided, occupied, as has been stated, a small farm under his grandfather, which lay on the banks of the Dart, a few miles from Totness. Their name was Prescot; they were cold-hearted and ignorant people; they had no children of their own, nor affection for those of others; neither had they received instructions to show any to him whom they were to adopt as a son; and if they had been arraigned for not doing so, they were of a character to have said with Shylock—"It is not in the bond." When he grew up, there was then no school in that part of Devonshire to which they could have sent him, had they been inclined—but they were not inclined; though, if they had had the power to educate him, they could have referred again to their bond, and said that no injunction to educate him was mentioned there. His first ideas were a consciousness of cruelty and oppression. At seven years of age he was sent to herd a few sheep upon Dartmoor; before he was nine, he was placed as a parish apprentice to the owner of a tin mine, and buried from the light of heaven.

Often and anxiously Lieutenant Morris wrote from India, inquiring after his sons. He sent presents—love gifts to each, but his letters were unheeded, his presents disregarded. His children grew up in ignorance of his existence, or of the existence of each other.

It was about eighteen years after the death of Maria, and what is called an annual *Revel* was held at Ashburton. Prizes were to be awarded to the best wrestlers, and hundreds were assembled from all parts of Devonshire to witness the sports of the day. Two companies of soldiers were stationed in the town at the time, and the officers, at the suggestion of a young ensign, called Charles Sim, agreed to subscribe a purse of ten guineas towards the

encouragement of the games. The young ensign was from Cumberland, where the science of wrestling is still a passion, and he, as the reader will have anticipated from the name he bore, was none other than one of the twin brothers. The games were skilfully and keenly contested; and a stripling from the neighbourhood of Totness, amidst the shouts of the multitude, was declared the victor. The last he had overcome was a gigantic soldier, a native of Cumberland. When the young ensign beheld his champion overcome, his blood rose for the honour of his native county, and he regretted that he had not sustained it in his own person.

The purse subscribed by the officers was still to be wrestled for, and the stripling victor re-entered the ring to compete for it. On his design being perceived, others, who wished to have contended for it, drew back, and he stood in the ring alone, no one daring to come forward to compete with him. The umpire of the games was proclaiming that, if no one stood against him, the purse would be awarded to him who had already been pronounced the victor of the day, when Ensign Sim, who with his brother officers had witnessed the sports from the windows of an adjacent inn, said—

"Well, the lad shall have the purse, though I don't expect he will win it; for if no one else will, I shall give him a throw, to redeem the credit of old Cumberland."

"Bravo, Sim!" cried his brother officers, and they accompanied him towards the ring.

The people again shouted when they perceived that there was to be another game, and the more so when they discovered that the stranger competitor was a gentleman. The ensign having cast off his regimentals, and equipped himself in the strait canvas jacket worn by wrestlers, entered the ring. But now arose a new subject of wonderment, which in a moment was perceived by the whole multitude; and the loud huzzas that had welcomed his approach, were hushed in a confused murmur of astonishment.

"Zwinge!" exclaimed a hundred voices, as they approached each other, "they be loik one anoother as two beans!"

"Whoy, which be which?" inquired others.

The likeness between the two wrestlers was, indeed, remarkable; their age, their stature, the colour of their hair, their features, were alike. Spectators could not trace a difference between the one and the other. The ensign had a small and peculiar mark below his chin—he perceived that his antagonist had the same. They approached each other, extending their arms for the contest. They stood still, they gazed upon each other; as they gazed, they started—their arms dropped by their sides—they stood anxiously scrutinizing the countenance of each other, in which each saw himself as in a glass. Astonishment deprived them of strength—they forgot the purpose for which they met—they stretched forth their hands, they grasped them together, and stood eagerly looking into each other's eyes.

"Friend," said the ensign, "this is indeed singular—our extraordinary resemblance to each other fills me with amazement. What is your name?—from whence do you come?"

"Whoy, master," rejoined the other, "thou art so woundy like myself, that had I met thee anywhere but in the middle o' these folk, I should have been afeared that I was agoing to die, and had seen mysel. My name is George Prescot, at your sarvice. I come from three miles down the river there—and what may they call thee?"

"My name," replied the soldier, "is Charles Sim. I am an orphan; my parents I never saw. And tell me—for this strange resemblance between us almost overpowers me—do yours live?"

"Whoy," was the reply, "old Tom Prescot and his woif be alive; and they zay as how they be my vather and moother, and I zuppose they be; but zoom cast up to them that they bean't."

No wrestling match took place between them; but hand in hand they walked round the ring together, while the spectators gazed upon them in silent wonder.

The ensign presented the youth, who might have been styled his *fac-simile*, with the purse subscribed by his brother officers and himself; and in so doing, he offered to double its contents. But the youth, with a spirit above his condition, peremptorily refused the offer, and said—

"No, master—thank you the zame—I will take nothing but what I have won."

Charles was anxious to visit "old Tom Prescot and his wife," of whom the stranger had spoken; but the company to which he belonged was to march forward to Plymouth on the following day, and there to embark. His brother officers also dissuaded him from the thought.

"Why, Sim," said they, "the likeness between you and the conqueror of the ring was certainly a very pretty coincidence, and your meeting each other quite a drama. But, my good fellow," added they, laughing, "take the advice of older heads than your own—don't examine too closely into your father's faults."

Three years passed, and Charles, now promoted to the rank of a lieutenant, accompanied the Duke of York in his more memorable than brilliant campaign in Holland. A soldier was accused of having been found sleeping on guard; he was tried, found guilty, and condemned to be shot. A corporal's guard was accompanying the doomed soldier from the place where sentence had been pronounced against him to the prison-house, from whence he was to be brought forth for execution on the following day. Lieutenant Sim passed near them. A voice exclaimed—

"Master! master!—save me! save me!"

It was the voice of the condemned soldier. The lieutenant turned round; and in the captive who called to him for assistance he recognised the Devonshire wrestler—the strange portrait of himself. And even now, if it were possible, the resemblance between them was more striking than before; for in the stranger, the awkwardness of the peasant had given place to the smartness of the soldier. Charles had felt an interest in him from the first moment he beheld him; he had wished to meet him again, and had resolved to seek for him should he return to England; and now the interest that he had before felt for him was increased tenfold. The offence and the fate of the doomed one were soon told. The lieutenant pledged himself that he would leave no effort untried to save him; and he redeemed his pledge. He discovered, he obtained proof, that the condemned prisoner, George Prescot, had been employed on severe and dangerous duties, against which it was impossible for nature longer to

stand up, but in all of which he had conducted himself as a good, brave, and a faithful soldier; and more, that it could not be proved that he was actually found asleep at his post, but that he was stupified through excess of fatigue.

He hastened to lay the evidence he had obtained respecting the conduct and innocence of the prisoner before his Royal Highness, who, whatever were his faults, was at least the soldier's friend. The Duke glanced over the documents which the lieutenant laid before him; he listened to the evidence of the comrades of the prisoner. He took a pen—he wrote a few lines—he placed them in the hands of Lieutenant Sim. They contained the free pardon of Private Prescot. Charles rushed with the pardon in his hand to the prisoner—he exclaimed—

"Take this—you are pardoned—you are free!"

The soldier would have embraced his knees to thank him; but the lieutenant said—

"No! kneel not to me—consider me as a brother. I have merely saved the life of an innocent and deserving man. But the strange resemblance between us seems to me more than a strange coincidence. You have doubts regarding your parentage; I know but little of mine. Nature has written a mystery on our faces which we need to have explained. When this campaign is over, we shall inquire concerning it. Farewell for the present; but we must meet again."

The feelings of the reprieved and unlettered soldier were too strong for his words to utter; he shook the hand of his deliverer and wept.

A few days after this, some sharp fighting took place. The loss of the British was considerable, and they were compelled to continue their retreat, leaving their dead, and many of their wounded, exposed, as they fell behind them. When they again arrived at the halting-place, Lieutenant Sim sought the regiment to which the soldier who might be termed his second self, belonged. But he was not to be found; and all that he could learn respecting him was, that three days before, George Prescot had been seen fighting bravely; but that he fell covered with wounds, and in their retreat was left upon the field.

Tears gushed into the eyes of the lieutenant when he heard the tidings. His singular meeting with the stranger in Devonshire—their mysterious resemblance to each other—his meeting him again in Holland, under circumstances yet more singular—his saving his life—and the dubious knowledge which each had respecting their birth and parentage—all had sunk deep into his heart, and thoughts of these things chased sleep from his pillow.

It was but a short time after this, that the regiment of Lieutenant Sim was ordered to India, and he accompanied it; and it was only a few months after his arrival, when the Governor-General gave an entertainment at his palace, at which all the military officers around were present. At table, opposite to Lieutenant Sim, sat a man of middle age; and, throughout the evening, his eyes remained fixed upon him, and occasionally seemed filled with tears. He was a Colonel in the Company's service, and a man who, by the force of merit, had acquired wealth and reputation.

"I crave your pardon, sir," said he, addressing the lieutenant; "but if I be not too bold, a few words with you in private would confer a favour upon me, and if my conjectures be right, will give us both cause to rejoice."

"You may command me, sir," said the youth.

The colonel rose from the table and left the room, and the lieutenant rose also and accompanied him. They entered an adjoining apartment. The elder soldier gazed anxiously on the face of the younger, and again addressing him, said—

"Sir, do not attribute this strange behaviour upon my part to rudeness. It has been prompted by feelings painfully, deeply, I may add, tenderly interesting to me. It may be accident, but your features bring memories before my eyes that have become a part of my soul's existence. Nor is it your features only, but I have observed that there is the mark of a rose-bud beneath your chin. I remember twins on whom that mark was manifest, and the likeness of a countenance is graven upon my heart, the lineaments of which were as yours are. Forgive me then, sir, in thus abruptly requesting your name."

The lieutenant looked surprised at the anxiety and looks of the stranger, and he answered—

"My name is Charles Sim."

"Yes! yes!" replied the colonel, gasping as he spoke—"I saw it—I felt it! Your name is Charles, but not Sim—that was your mother's name—your sainted mother's. You bear it from your grandfather. You come from Cumberland?"

"I do!" was the reply, in accents of astonishment.

"My son! my son!—child of my Maria!" were the accents that broke from the colonel, as he fell upon the neck of the other.

"My father!" exclaimed Charles, "have I then found a father?" And the tears streamed down his cheeks.

Many questions were asked, many answered: and amongst others, the father inquired—

"Where is your brother—my little George?—does he live? You were the miniatures of your mother, and so strikingly did you resemble each other, that, while you were infants, it was necessary to tie a blue ribbon round his arm and a green one round yours, to distinguish you from each other."

Charles became pale—his knees shook—his hands trembled.

"Then I *had* a brother!" he cried.

"You had," replied his father; "but wherefore do you say you *had* a brother? Is it possible that you do not know him? He has been brought up with my father—Mr. Morris of Morris House."

"No, he has not," replied Charles; "the man you speak of, and whom you say is my grandfather, has brought up no one—none of my age. I have hated him from childhood, for he has hated me; and, but that you have told me he is my grandfather, I would hate him still. But he has brought up no one that could be a brother of mine."

"Then my child has died in infancy," rejoined the colonel.

"No, no," added Charles—"I knew not that I had a brother, not even that I had a father; but, you say, my brother resembled me—that I from my birth had the mark beneath my chin which I have now, and that he had the same:—then I know him—I have seen my brother!"

"Where—where—when—when?" breathlessly inquired the anxious parent; "speak, my son!—oh, speak!"

"Shortly after I had joined my regiment," continued Charles, "I was present in Devonshire, at what is called a revel. Our mess gave a purse towards the games. We put forward a Cumberland man belonging to the regiment, in the full confidence that he would be the victor of the day; but a youth, a mere youth, threw not only our champion, but all who dared to oppose him. I was stung for the honour of Cumberland—I was loath to see the hero carry his laurels so easily from the field. I accoutred myself in the wrestler's garb—I entered the ring. The shouting of the multitude ceased instantaneously. I gazed upon my antagonist, he gazed upon me. Our hands fell—we both shook—we were the image of each other. Three years afterwards, I was in Holland. A soldier was unjustly condemned to die—I saved him—I obtained his pardon—he was my strange counterpart whom I met in Devonshire. He had the mark of the rose-bud beneath his chin that I have, and which, you say, my brother has."

"And where is he now?" eagerly inquired the colonel.

"Alas! I know not," answered Charles; "nor do I think he lives. Three days after I had rescued him from unmerited death, I learned that he had fallen bravely on the field; and whether he be now a prisoner or with the dead, I cannot tell."

"Surely it was thy brother," said the colonel; "yet how he should be in Devonshire, or a soldier in the ranks puzzles me to think. No, no, Charles; it cannot be—it is a coincidence heightened by imagination. Your grandfather has not been kind to me, but he is not capable of the cruelty which the tale you have told would imply he had exercised towards the child I intrusted to his care. He hates me; but surely he could not be cruel to my offspring. You know Morris House?" he added.

"I know it well," replied Charles; "but I never knew in it one who could be my brother, nor one of my age, neither did I know Mr. Morris to be my grandfather; nor yet have I heard of him but as one who had injured my

mother while she lived, and who had been the enemy of her parents."

"Enough, enough, my son," said the colonel—"my soul is filled with words which I cannot utter. I weep for your angel-mother—I weep for my son, your brother—and I mourn for the unceasing hatred that exists between your grandsires. But, Charles, we must return to England; we must do so instantly. I have now fortune enough for you, and for your brother also, if he yet live, and if we can find him. But we must inquire after and go in quest of him."

Within three months, Charles Morris, or Lieutenant Sim, as he has hitherto been called, and his father, returned to England together. But, instead of following them, I shall return to George Prescot, the prize-wrestler, and the condemned and pardoned soldier. It has been mentioned that he was wounded and left upon the field by a retreating army. I have to add, that he was made prisoner; and, when his wounds were healed, he was, though not perceptibly, disabled for active service. Amongst his brethren in captivity was a Captain Paling, who, when an exchange of prisoners took place, hastened to join his regiment, and gave George, who was deemed unfit for service, a letter to his mother and sisters, who resided in Dartmouth. The leter was all that the captain could give him; for he was penniless as George was himself.

George Prescot, feeling himself once more at liberty, took his passage from Rotterdam in a sloop bound for Dartmouth, and with only the letter of Captain Paling in his pocket to pay for his conveyance. He perceived that the skipper frequently cast suspicious glances toward him, as though he were about to ask—"Where is your money, sir?" But George saw this, and he bore it down with a high hand. He knew that the certain way of being treated with the contempt and neglect which poverty always introduces in its train, was to plead being poor. He was by no means learned, but he understood something of human nature, and he knew a good deal of the ways of men—of the shallowness of society, and the depths of civility. He therefore carried his head high. He called for the best that the ship could

afford, and he fared as the skipper did, though he partook but sparingly.

But the vessel arrived at Dartmouth harbour—it entered the mouth of the romantic river, on the one side of which was the fort, still bearing the name of Cromwell, and on the other, Kingsbridge, which Peter Pindar hath celebrated; while, on both sides, as precipitous banks, rose towering hills, their summits covered by a stunted furze, and the blooming orchard meeting it midway.

Some rather unpleasant sensations visited the disabled soldier as the vessel sailed up the river towards the town. The beauty of its situation made no impression upon him, for he had seen it a thousand times; and it was perhaps as well that it did not; for to look on it from the river or from a distant height—like a long line of houses hung on the breast of romance—and afterwards to enter it, and find yourself in the midst of a narrow, dingy street, where scarce two wheelbarrows could pass, produceth only disappointment, and that, too, of the bitterest kind. It seems, indeed, that the Devonians have conceded so much of their beautiful county to the barrenness of Dartmoor, that they grudge every inch that is occupied as a street or highway. Ere this time, George Prescot had, in great measure, dropped his Devonshire dialect; and now, taking the letter of Captain Paling from his pocket, he placed it in the hands of the commander of the packet, saying—'Send your boy ashore with this to a widow lady's of the name of Paling—you will know her family, I suppose. You may tell the boy to say that the letter is from her son, Captain Paling, and that I shall wait here until I receive her answer, before proceeding up the river."

The skipper stated that he knew Mrs. Paling well, who was a most respectable lady, and that he remembered also her son, who was an officer in the army, and who for some time had been a prisoner of war.

The boy went on shore with the letter, and within a quarter of an hour returned, having with him a young gentleman, accompanied by a couple of pointer dogs. The stranger was the brother of Captain Paling. He inquired

for George Prescot, and, on seeing him, invited him to his mother's house. The skipper, on seeing his passenger in such respectable company, let fall no hint that the passage money was not paid; and the soldier and the brother of Captain Paling went on shore together.

In his letter, the captain dwelt on many kindnesses which he had received from its bearer, and of the bravery which he had seen him evince on the field; informing them also that his pockets would be but ill provided with cash, and regretting his own inability to replenish them.

The kindness of Mrs. Paling and her family towards him knew no limits. She asked him a hundred questions respecting her son, her daughters concerning their brother; and they imagined wants for him, that they might show him a kindness. Now, however, twelve miles was all that lay between him and his home. They entreated him to remain until next day, but he refused; for

"Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

It is true he could hardly give the name of home to the house of those whom he called his parents, for it had ever been to him the habitation of oppressors: yet it was his home—as the mountain covered with eternal snow is the home of the Greenlander—and he knew no other. The usual road to it was by crossing the Dart at a ferry about a hundred yards above the house of Mrs. Paling. Any other road caused a circuit of many miles.

"If you will not remain with us to-night," said the brother of Captain Paling, who had conducted him from the vessel to his mother's house, "I shall accompany you to the ferry."

"No, I thank you—I thank you," said George, confusedly, there is no occasion for it—none whatever, I shall not forget your kindness."

He did not intend to go by the ferry; for, though the charge of the boatman was but a halfpenny, that halfpenny he had not in his possession; and he wished to conceal his poverty.

But women have sharp eyes in these matters—they see where men are blind; and a sister of Captain Paling, named Caroline, read the meaning of their guest's confusion, and of his refusing to permit her brother to accompany him to the shore; and, with a delicacy which spoke to the heart of him to whom the words were addressed, she said—"Mr. Prescot, you have only now arrived from the Continent, and it is most likely that you have no small change in your pocket. The ferrymen are unreasonable people to deal with; if you give them a crown, they will row away and thank you, forgetting to return the change. The regular charge is but a halfpenny, therefore you had better take coppers with you." And, as she spoke, she held a halfpenny in her fingers towards him.

"Well, well," stammered out George, with his hands in his pocket, "I believe I have no coppers." And he accepted the halfpenny from the hand of Caroline Paling, and, while he did so, he could not conceal the tears that rose to his eyes.

But, trifling as the amount of her offer was, it must be understood that the person to whom it was tendered was one who would not have accepted more—who was ashamed of his poverty, and strove to conceal it—and there was a soul, there was a delicacy in her manner of tendering it, which I can speak of but not describe. It saved him also from having to wander weary and solitary miles at midnight.

No sooner had the disabled soldier crossed the river, and entered the narrow lanes overshadowed by dark hedges of hazel, than he burst into tears, and his first words were —"Caroline, I will remember thee!"

It was near midnight when he approached the house which he called his home. The inmates were asleep. He tapped at the window, the panes of which were framed in lead, after the form of diamonds.

"Who be there!" cried an angry voice.

"Your son!—your son!" he replied—"George!"

"Zon!" repeated the voice; "we have no zon. If it be thee, go to Coomberland, lad. We have noughts to do with thee. Thy old grandfather, Zquire Morris, be now dead,

and he ha'n't paid us so well for what we have done, as to have oughts to zay to thee again—zo, good night, lad."

"Father !—mother !" cried George, striking more passionately on the window, "what do you mean ?"

"Whoy, ha'n't I told thee ?" answered the voice that spoke to him before ; "thou art no zon of ours. Thou moost go to Coomberland, man, to Zquire Morris—to his zeketors, I mean, for he is dead. They may tell thee who thou art—I can't. We ha'n't been paid for what we have done for thee already. However, thou may'st coom in for t'night." And, as the old man who had professed to be his father spoke, he arose and opened the door.

George entered the house, trembling with agitation.

"Father," he said—"for thou hast taught me to call thee father—and, if thou art not, tell me who I am."

"Ha'n't I told thee, lad ?" answered the old man ; "go to Coomberland—I know noughts about thee."

"To Cumberland !" exclaimed George—and he thought of the young officer whom he had twice met, who belonged to that county, and whose features were the picture of his own —"why should I go to Cumberland ?"

"Whoy, I can't tell thee whoy thou shouldst go," said the old man ; "but thou wast zent me from there, and thou moost go back again—vor a bad bargain thou hast been to me. Zquire Morris zent thee here, and forgot to pay for thee ; and, if thou lodgest here to-night, thou won't forget to be a-moving, bag and baggage, in the morning."

George was wearied, and glad to sleep beneath the inhospitable roof of those whom he had considered as his parents ; but, on the following morning, he took leave of them, after learning from them all that they knew of his history.

But I must again leave him, and return to Colonel Morris and his son Charles.

They came to England together, and hastened towards Morris' house ; and, there, the long disowned son learned that his father was dead, and that his mother and his sisters knew not where his child was, or what had become of him. But his kindred had ascertained that he was now rich, and they repented of their unkindness towards him.

"Son," said his mother, "I know nothing of thy child. Thy father was a strange man—he told little to me. If any one can tell thee aught concerning thy boy, it will be John Bell, the old coachman; but he has not been in the family for six years, and where he now is I cannot tell, though I believe he is still somewhere in the neighbourhood."

With sad and anxious hearts the colonel and his son next visited the house of Mr. Sim—the dwelling-place in which the infancy, the childhood, and what may be called the youth, of the latter had been passed.

Tears gathered in the eyes of Charles as he approached the door. He knew that his grandsire and his grandmother had acted wrongly towards him, in never speaking to him of his father, or making known to him that such a person lived; but when he again saw the house which had been the scene of a thousand happy days, round which he had chased the gaudy butterfly and the busy bee, or sought the nest of the chaffinch, the yellowhammer, and the hedge-sparrow, the feelings of boyhood rose too strong in his soul for resentment; and on meeting Mr. Sim (his grandfather), as they approached the door of the house, Charles ran towards him, and, stretching out his hand, cried—"Father!"

The old man recognised him, and exclaimed, "Charles!—Charles!—child of my Maria!" and wept.

At the mention of her name, the colonel wept also.

"What gentleman is this with thee, Charles?" inquired Mr. Sim.

"It is *my father!*" was the reply.

Mr. Sim, who was now a grey-haired man, reeled back a few paces—he raised his hands—he exclaimed—"Can I be forgiven?"

"Forgiven!—ay, doubly forgiven!" answered Colonel Morris, "as the father of lost, loved Maria, and as having been more than a father to my boy who is now by my side. But know you nothing of my other son?—my Maria bore twins."

"Nothing! nothing!" replied Mr. Sim; "that question has cost me many an anxious thought. It has troubled also

the conscience of my wife—for it was her fault that he also was not committed to my charge ; and I would have inquired after your child long ago, but that there was no good-will between your father and me ; and I was a plain retired citizen—he a magistrate, and a justice of the peace for the county, who could do no wrong."

The colonel groaned.

They proceeded towards the villa together. Mrs. Sim met her grandson with a flood of tears, and, in her joy at meeting him, she forgot her dislike to his father, and her hatred to that father's family.

The colonel endeavoured to obtain information from his father-in-law respecting his other son ; and he told him all that his mother had said, of what she had spoken regarding the coachman, and also of what Charles had told him, in twice meeting one who so strongly resembled himself.

"Colonel," said Mr. Sim, "I know the John Bell your mother speaks of ; he now keeps an inn near Langholm. To-morrow we shall go to his house and make inquiry concerning all that he knows."

"Be it so, father," said the colonel. And, on the following day, they took a chaise and set out together—the grandfather, the father, and the son.

They had to cross the Annan, and to pass the churchyard where Maria slept. As they drew near to it, the colonel desired the driver to stop.

"Follow me, Charles," he said ; and Mr. Sim accompanied them.

They entered the churchyard ; the colonel led them to the humble grave-stone that he had raised to the memory of his Maria. He sat down upon it, he pressed his lips to it and wept.

"Charles," said he, "look on your mother's grave. Here, on this stone, day, after day, I was wont to sit with you and your brother upon my knee, fondling you, breathing your mother's name in your ears ; and, though neither of you knew what I said, you smiled as I wept and spoke. O Charles, though you then filled my whole heart (and you do now), I could only distinguish you from each other by

the ribbons on your arms. Would to heaven that I may discover my child; and, whatever be his condition, I shall forgive my father for the injustice he has done me and mine—I shall be happy. And, oh! should we indeed find your brother—should he prove to be the youth whom you have twice met—I shall say that heaven has remembered me when I forgot myself! But come hither, Charles—come kneel upon your mother's grave—kiss the sod where she lies, and angels will write it in their books, and show it to your mother, where she is happy. Come, my boy."

Charles knelt on his mother's grave. He had arisen, and they were about to depart; for his grandfather had accompanied them, and was a silent but tearful spectator of the scene.

They were leaving the churchyard joined in the arms of each other, when two strangers entered it. The one was John Bell, and the other George Prescot.

"Colonel! Colonel!—there is John Bell that you spoke of," exclaimed Mr. Sim.

"Father! father!" at the same instant cried his son, "he is here—it is him!—my brother—or—he whom I have told you of, who so strangely resembles me!"

Charles rushed forward—it was George Prescot—and he took the proffered hand of the other, and said—"Sir, I rejoice to meet thee again—it seems I belong to Cumberland as well as thou dost; and this gentleman (pointing to John Bell), who seems to know more of me than I do myself, has promised to show me here my mother's grave!"

"And where is that grave?" cried the colonel earnestly, who had been an interested spectator of all that passed.

"Even where the wife of your youth is buried, your honour," answered John Bell: "you have with you one son—behold his twin brother!"

The colonel pressed his new found son to his breast. With his children he sat down on the stone over Maria's grave, and they wept together.

Our tale is told. Colonel Morris and his sons had met. His elder brothers died, and he became the heir of his father's property. Mr. Sim also stated that in his will he should divide his substance equally between the brothers

—and he did so. I have but another word to add. George forgot not Caroline Paling, who had assisted him when his heart was full and his pocket empty, and within twelve months he again visited Dartmouth; but, when he returned from it, Caroline accompanied him as his wife—and when he introduced her to his father and his brother, "Behold," said he, "what a halfpenny delicately tendered may produce."

LEAVES

FROM THE DIARY OF AN AGED SPINSTER.

THE poet of THE ELEGY *par excellence*, hath written two lines which run thus—

> "Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
> And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

Now, I never can think of these lines but they remind me of the tender, delicate, living, breathing, and neglected flowers that bud, blossom, shed their leaves, and die, in cold, unsunned obscurity—flowers that were formed to shed their fragrance around a man's heart, and to charm his eye—but which, though wandering melancholy and alone in the wilderness where they grow, he passeth by with neglect, making a companion of his loneliness. But, to drop all metaphor—where will you find a flower more interesting than a spinster of threescore and ten, of sixty, of fifty, or of forty? They have, indeed, "wasted their sweetness on the desert air." Some call them "old maids;" but it is a malicious appellation, unless it can be proved that they have refused to be wives. I would always take the part of a spinster: they are a peculiar people, far more "sinned against than sinning." Every blockhead thinks himself at liberty to crack a joke upon them; and when he says something that he conceives to be wondrous smart about Miss Such-an-one and her cat or poodle dog, he conceives himself a marvellous clever fellow; yea, even those of her own sex who are below what is called a "certain age," (what that age is, I cannot tell), think themselves privileged to giggle at the expense of their elder sister. Now, though there may be a degree of peevishness (and it is not to be wondered at) amongst the sisterhood, yet with

them you will find the most sensitive tenderness of heart, a delicacy that quivers like the aspen leaf at a breath, and a kindliness of soul that a mother might envy—or rather, for envy, shall I not write *imitate?* But, ah! if their history were told, what a chronicle would it exhibit of blighted affections, withered hearts, secret tears, and midnight sighs.

The first spinster of whom I have a particular remembrance, as belonging to her caste, was Diana Darling. It is now six and twenty years since Diana paid the debt of nature, up to which period, and for a few years before, she rented a room in Chirnside. It was only a year or two before her death that I became acquainted with her; and I was then very young. But I never shall forget her kindness towards me. She treated me as though I had been her own child, or rather her granchild, for she was then very little under seventy years of age. She had always an air of gentility about her; people called her "a betterish sort o' body." And, although *Miss* and *Mistress* are becoming general appellations now, twenty or thirty years ago, upon the Borders, those titles were only applied to particular persons, or on particular occasions; and whether their more frequent use now is to be attributed to the schoolmaster being abroad or the dancing master being abroad, I cannot tell, but Diana Darling, although acknowledged to be a "betterish sort o' body," never was spoken of by any other term but "auld Diana," or "auld Die." Well do I remember her flowing chintz gown with short sleeves, her snow-white apron, her whiter cap, and old kid gloves reaching to her elbows; and as well do I remember how she took one of the common *blue cakes* which washerwomen use, and tying it up in a piece of woollen cloth, dipped it in water, and daubed it round and round the walls of her room, to give them the appearance of being papered. I have often heard of and seen *stenciling* since; but, rude as the attempt was, I am almost persuaded that Diana was the first who put it in practice. To keep up gentility putteth people to strange shifts, and often to ridiculous ones—and to both of these extremities she was driven. But I have hinted that she was a kind-hearted creature; and above all, do I remember her for the fine old ballads

which she sang to me. But there was one that was an especial favourite with her, and a verse of which, if I remember correctly, ran thus—

"Fie, Lizzie Lindsay!
Sae lang in the mornins ye lie,
Mair fit ye was helping yer minny
To milk a' the ewes and the kye."

Diana, however, was a woman of some education; and to a relative she left a sort of history of her life, from which the following is an extract:—

"My faither died before I was eighteen (so began Diana's narrative), and he left five of us—that is, my mother, two sisters, a brother, and myself—five hundred pounds a-piece. My sisters were both younger than me; but, within six years after our faither's death, they both got married; and my brother, who was only a year older than myself, left the house also, and took a wife, so that there was nobody but me and my mother left. Everybody thought there was something very singular in this; for it was not natural that the youngest should be taken and the auldest left; and, besides, it was acknowledged that I was the best faured and the best-tempered in the family; and there could be no dispute but that my siller was as good as theirs.

"I must confess, however, that, when I was but a lassie o' sixteen, I had drawn up wi' one James Laidlaw—but I should score out the word *one*, and just say that I had drawn up wi' *James Laidlaw*. He was a year, or maybe three, aulder than me, and I kenned him when he was just a laddie at Mr. Wh—'s school in Dunse; but I took no notice o' him then in particular, and, indeed, I never did, until one day that I was an errand down by Kimmerghame, and I met James just coming out frae the gardens. It was the summer season, and he had a posie in his hand, and a very bonnie posie it was. 'Here's a fine day, Diana,' says he. 'Yes it is,' says I.

"So we said nae mair for some time; but he keepit walking by my side, and at last he said—'What do ye think o this posie?' 'It is very bonny, James,' said I. 'I think sae,' quoth he; 'and if you will accept it, there should nae-

body be mair welcome to it.' 'Ou, I thank ye,' said I, and I blushed in a way—'why should ye gie me it?' 'Never mind,' said he, 'tak it for old acquaintance sake—we were at the school together.'

"So I took the flowers, and James keepit by my side, and cracked to me a' the way to my mother's door, and I cracked to him—and I really wondered that the road between Kimmerghame and Dunse had turned sae short. It wasna half the length that it used to be, or what I thought it ought to be.

"But I often saw James Laidlaw after this; and somehow or other I aye met him just as I was coming out o' the kirk, and weel do I recollect that, one Sabbath in particular, he said to me—'Diana, will ye no come out and tak a walk after ye get your dinner?' 'I dinna ken, James,' says I; 'I doubt I daurna, for our folk are very particular, and baith my faither and my mother are terribly against onything like gaun about stravaigin on the Sundays.' 'Oh, they need never ken where yer gaun,' says he. 'Weel, I'll try, says I, for by this time I had a sort o' liking for James. 'Then,' said he, 'I'll be at the Penny Stane at four o'clock.' 'Very weel,' quoth I.

"And, although baith my faither and mother said to me, as I was gaun out—'Where are ye gaun, lassie?'—'Oh, no very far,' said I; and, at four o'clock, I met James at the Penny Stane. I shall never forget the grip that he gied my hand when he took it in his, and said—

"'Ye hae been as good as your word, Diana.'

"We wandered awa doun by Wedderburn dyke, till we came to the Blackadder, and then we sauntered down by the riverside, till we were opposite Kelloe—and, oh, it was a pleasant afternoon. Everything round about us, aboon us, and among our feet, seemed to ken it was Sunday—everything but James and me. The laverock was singing in the blue lift—the blackbirds were whistling in the hedges—the mavis chanted its loud sang frae the bushes on the braes—the lennerts were singing and chirming among the whins—and the shelfa absolutely seemed to follow ye wi' its three notes over again, in order that ye might learn them.

"It was the happiest afternoon I ever spent. James grat,

and I grat. I got a scolding frae my faither and my mother when I gaed hame, and they demanded to ken where I had been; but the words that James had spoken to me bore me up against their reproaches.

"Weel, it was very shortly, (I daresay not six months after my faither's death), that James called at my mother's, and as he said, to bid us *fareweel!* He took my mother's hand—I mind I saw him raise it to his lips, while the tears were on his cheeks; and he was also greatly put about to part wi' my sisters; but to me he said—

"'Ye'll set me down a bit, Diana.'

"He was to take the coach for Liverpool—or, at least, a coach to take him on the road to that town, the next day; and from there he was to proceed to the West Indies, to meet an uncle who was to make him his heir.

"I went out wi' him, and we wandered away down by our auld walks; but, oh, he said little, and he sighed often, and his heart was sad. But mine was as sad as his, and I could say as little as him. I winna, I canna write a' the words and the vows that passed. He took the chain frae his watch, and it was o' the best gold, and he also took a pair o' Bibles frae his pocket, and he put the watch chain and the Bibles into my hand, and—'Diana,' said he, 'take these, dear—keep them for the sake o' your poor James, and, as often as ye see them, think on him.' I took them, and wi' the tears running down my cheeks—'O James,' cried I, 'this is hard!—hard!'

"Twice, ay thrice, we bade each other '*fareweel*,' and thrice, after he had parted frae me, he cam running back again, and, throwing his arms round my neck, cried—

"'Diana! I canna leave ye!—promise me that ye will never marry onybody else!'

"And thrice I promised him that I wouldna.

"But he gaed awa, and my only consolation was looking at the Bibles, on one o' the white leaves o' the first volume o' which I found written, by his own hand, '*James Laidlaw and Diana Darling vowed that, if they were spared, they would become man and wife; and that neither time, distance, nor circumstances, should absolve their plighted troth. Dated, May 25th, 17—.*'

"These were cheering words to me; and I lived on them

for years, even after my younger sisters were married, and I had ceased to hear from him. And, during that time, for his sake, I had declined offers which my friends said I was waur than foolish to reject. At least half a dozen good matches I let slip through my hands, and a' for the love o' James Laidlaw, who was far awa, and the vows he had plighted to me by the side o' the Blackadder. And, although he hadna written to me for some years, I couldna think that ony man could be so wicked as to write words o' falsehood and bind them up in the volume o' everlasting truth.

"But, about ten years after he had gane awa, James Laidlaw came back to our neighbourhood; but he wasna the same lad he left—for he was now a dark-complexioned man, and he had wi' him a mulatto woman and three bairns that called him *faither!* He was no longer my James!

"My mother was by this time dead, and I expected naething but that the knowledge o' his faithlessness would kill me too—for I had clung to hope till the last straw was broken.

"I met him once during his stay in the country, and, strange to tell, it was within a hundred yards o' the very spot where I first foregathered wi' him, when he offered me the posie.

"'Ha! Die!' said he, 'my old girl, are you still alive? I'm glad to see you. Is the old woman, your mother, living yet? I was ready to faint, my heart throbbed as though it would have burst. A' the trials I had ever had were naething to this; and he continued—'Why, if I remember right, there was once something like an old flame between you and me.' 'O James! James!' said I, 'do ye remember the words ye wrote in the Bible, and the vows that ye made me by the side of the Blackadder?" 'Ha! ha!' said he, and he laughed, 'you are there, are you? I do mind something of it. But, Die, I did not think that a girl like you would have been such a fool as to remember what a boy said to her."

"I would have spoken to him again; but I remembered he was the husband of another woman—though she was a mulatto—an' I hurried away as fast as my fainting heart would permit. I had but one consolation, and that was

that, though he had married another, naebody could compare her face wi' mine.

"But it was lang before I got the better o' this sair slight —ay, I may say it was ten years and mair; and I had to try to pingle and find a living upon the interest o' my five hundred pounds, wi' ony other thing that I could turn my hand to in a genteel sort o' way.

"I was now getting on the wrang side o' eight and thirty; and that is an age when it isna prudent in a spinster to be throwing the pouty side o' her lip to any decent lad that hauds out his hand, and says—'Jenny, will ye tak me? Often and often, baith by day and by night, did I think o' the good bargains I had lost, for the sake o' my fause James Laidlaw; and often when I saw some o' them that had come praying to me, pass me on a Sunday, wi' their wives wi' their hands half round their waist on the horse behint them —'O James! fause James!' I have said, 'but for trusting to you, and it would hae been me that would this day been riding behint Mr.——'

"But I had still five hundred pounds, and sic fend as I could make, to help what they brought to me. And, about this time, there was one that had the character of being a very respectable sort o' lad, one Walter Sanderson; he was a farmer, very near about my own age, and altogether a most prepossessing and intelligent young man. I first met wi' him at my youngest sister's goodman's kirn, and I must say, a better or a more gracefu' dancer I never saw upon a floor. He had neither the jumping o' a mountebank, nor the sliding o' a play-actor, but there was an ease in his carriage which I never saw equalled. I was particularly struck wi' him, and especially his dancing; and it so happened that he was no less struck wi' me. I thought he looked even better than James Laidlaw used to do—but at times I had doubts about it. However he had stopped all the night at my brother-in-law's as weel as mysel; and when I got up to gang hame the next day, he said he would bear me company. I thanked him, said I was obliged to him, never thinking that he would attempt such a thing. But, just as the powny was brought for me to ride on (and the callant was to come up to Dunse for it at night), Mr. Walter Sanderson mounted his horse, and says he—

"'Now, wi' your permission, Miss Darling, I will see you hame.'

"It would hae been very rude o' me to hae said—'No, I thank you, sir,' and especially at my time o' life wi' twa younger sisters married that had families; so I blushed as it were, and gein my powny a twitch, he sprang on to his saddle, and came trotting on by my side. He was very agreeable company; and when he said, 'I shall be most happy to pay you a visit, Miss Darling,' I didna think o' what I had said, until after that I had answered him, 'I shall be very happy to see you, sir.' And when I thought o' it, my very cheek-bones burned wi' shame.

"But, howsoever, Mr. Sanderson was not long in calling again—and often he did call, and my sisters and their guid-men began to jeer me about him. Weel, he called and called, for I daresay as good as three quarters of a year; and he was sae backward and modest a' the time that I thought him a very remarkable man; indeed, I began to think him every way superior to James Laidlaw.

"But at last he made proposals—I consented—the wedding-day was set, and we had been cried in the kirk. It was the fair day, just two days before we were to be married, and he came into the house, and, after he had been seated a while, and cracked in his usual kind way—

"'Oh,' says he, 'what a bargain I hae missed the day! There are four lots o' cattle in the market, and I might hae cleared four hundred pounds cent. per cent. by them.'

"'Losh me! Walter, then,' says I, 'why didna ye do it? How did ye let sic a bargain slip through your fingers?'

"'Woman,' said he, 'I dinna ken; but a man that is to be married within eight and forty hours is excusable. I came to the Fair without any thought o' either buying or selling—but just to see you, Diana—and I kenned there wasna meikle siller necessary for that.'

"'Losh, Walter, man,' said I, 'but that is a pity—and ye say ye could mak cent. per cent. by the beasts?'

"'Deed could I,' quoth he—'I am sure o' that.'

"'Then, Walter,' says I, 'what is mine the day is to be yours the morn, I may say; and it would be a pity to lose sic a bargain.'

"Therefore I put into his hands an order on a branch bank that had been established in Dunse, for every farthing that I was worth in the world, and Walter kissed me, and went out to get the money frae the bank, and buy the cattle.

"But he hadna been out an hour, when one o' my brothers-in-law called, and I thought he looked unco dowie. So I began to tell him about the excellent bargain that Walter had made, and what I had done. But the man started frae his seat as if he were crazed, and without asking me ony questions, he only cried—'Gracious! Diana! hae ye been sic an idiot?' and, rushing out o' the house, ran to the bank.

"He left me in a state that I canna describe: I neither kenned what to do nor what to think. But within half an hour he returned, and he cried out as he entered—'Diana, ye are ruined! He has taken in you and everybody else. The villain broke yesterday. He is off! Ye may bid fareweel to your siller.' 'Wha is off?' cried I, and I was in sic a state I was hardly able to speak. 'Walter Sanderson!' answered my brother-in-law.

"I believe I went into hysterics: for the first thing I mind o' after his saying so, was a dozen people standing round about me—some slapping at the palms o' my hands, and others laving water on my breast and temples, until they had me as wet as if they had douked me in Pollock's Well.

"I canna tell how I stood up against this clap o' misery. It was near getting the better o' me. For a time I really hated the very name and the sight o' man, and I said, as the song says, that

'Men are a' deceivers.'

But this was not the worst o' it—I had lost my all, and I was now forced into the acquaintanceship of poverty and dependence. I first went to live under the roof o' my youngest sister, who had always been my favourite; but, before six months went around, I found that she began to treat me just as though I had been a servant, ordering me to do this and do the other; and sometimes my dinner was sent ben to me into the kitchen; and the servant

lassies, seeing how their mistress treated me, considered that they should be justified in doing the same—and they did the same. Many a weary time have I lain upon my bed and wished never to rise again, for my spirit was weary o' this world. But I put up wi' insult after insult, until flesh and blood could endure it no longer. Then did I go to my other sister, and she hardly opened her mouth to me as I entered her house. I saw that I might gang where I liked—I wasna welcome there. Before I had been a week under her roof, I found that the herd's dog led a lady's life to mine. I was forced to leave her too.

"And, as a sort o' last alternative, just to keep me in existence, I began a bit shop in a neighbouring town, and took in sewing and washing; and after I had tried them awhile, and found that they would hardly do, I commenced a bit school, at the advice of the minister's wife, and learned bairns their letters and the catechism, and knitting and sewing. I also taught them (for they were a' girls) how to work their samplers, and to write, and to cast accounts. But what vexed and humbled me more than all I had suffered, was that one night, just after I had let my scholars away, an auld hedger and ditcher body, almost sixty years o' age, came into the house, and 'How's a' wi' ye the nicht?' says he, though I had never spoken to the man before. But he took off his bonnet, and pulling in a chair, drew a seat to the fire. I was thunderstruck! But I was yet mair astonished and ashamed, when the auld body, sleeking down his hair and his chin, had the assurance to make love to me!

"'There is the door, sir!' cried I. And when he didna seem willing to understand me, I gripped him by the shouthers, and showed him what I meant.

"Yet quite composedly he turned round to me and said, 'I dinna see what is the use o' the like o' this—it is true I am aulder than you, but you are at a time o' life now that ye canna expect ony young man to look at ye. Therefore, ye had better think twice before ye turn me to the door. Ye will find it just as easy a life being the wife o' a hedger as keeping a school—rather mair sae I apprehend,

and mair profitable too.' I had nae patience wi' the man. I thought my sisters had insulted me; but this offer o' the hedger's wounded me mair than a' that they had done.

"'O James Laidlaw!' cried I, when I was left to mysel, 'what hae ye brought me to!' My sisters dinna look after me. My parting wi' them has gien them an excuse to forget that I exist. My brother is far frae me, and he is ruled by a wife; and I hae been robbed by another o' the little that I had. I am like a withered tree in a wilderness, standing by its lane—I will fa' and naebody will miss me. I am sick, and there are none to haud my head. My throat is parched, and my lips dry, and there are none to bring me a cup o' water. There is nae *living thing* that I can ca' mine. And some day I shall be found a stiffened corpse in my bed, with no one near me to close my eyes in death, or perform the last office of humanity! For I am alone—I am by myself—I am forgotten in the world; and my latter years, if I have a long life, will be a burden to strangers.'"

But Diana Darling did not so die. Her gentleness, her kindness, caused her to be beloved by many who knew not her history; and, when the last stern messenger came to call her hence, many watched with tears around her bed of death, and many more in sorrow followed her to the grave. So ran the few leaves in the diary of a spinster—and the reader will forgive our interpolations.

MADELINE OF ROECLEUGH;

OR,

THE HILTON PROPHECY.

IN the heart of the Lammermuir hills are still to be seen the gray ruins of an ancient baronial pile, perched, in spectral gloom, upon the rugged margin of one of those dark ravines by which that wild district is here and there intersected.

At the time of the commencement of our tale—namely, the latter part of the seventeenth century—it belonged to a branch of the ancient family of Sinclair, and indeed, had done so for centuries before. Sir George Sinclair, the present proprietor and occupier of the castle, had had several children, whom, with their mother, the hand of death had, one by one, carried away—one young and beautiful daughter alone remaining to be the joy and solace of his declining years. The family of Sinclair had long been noted as staunch Catholics; and though their present representative did not display such an ardent zeal in promoting and defending the interests of the Church of Rome, as had been evinced by many of his predecessors, he kept in his service none but Catholic retainers, and caused his daughter to be educated in the principles of that faith by an aged Catholic priest who resided in the castle. Under the care of this venerable individual, Madeline Sinclair—for that was her name—acquired a pretty accurate acquaintance with the various branches considered necessary in the education of a female of her rank at that day. But, independent of her acquired accomplishments, the natural sweetness of her disposition, aided by a share of personal beauty which even the least susceptible of mankind could scarcely have

beheld without admiration, caused Madeline to be regarded by all with interest; but by the inhabitants of the neighbouring village, most of whom had experienced her kindness when suffering under poverty or disease, her delicate form tripping lightly toward the abode of sorrow, was viewed rather as that of an angel, than as an ordinary framework of human clay.

The retirement in which Madeline and her father lived, was but seldom broken in upon till the former had reached her sixteenth year. Their most frequent visitor was the young Lord Avondale, a near relative of Madeline's mother, who, during his boyhood, had been annually in the habit of spending a few weeks at Roecleugh Castle. Her time had always glided away most happily during young Avondale's visits; and the fall of the leaf, which never failed to bring him to Roecleugh, had always been looked forward to with pleasing anticipations. He used to accompany her during her favourite walks by the side of the streamlet, read to her, and render her a thousand little attentions, trifling no doubt in themselves, but which seldom fail to prove gratifying to the individual to whom they are directed.

The friendship thus early formed had increased and ripened with years into the more impassioned feeling of attachment known to all by the familiar name of *love*.

It has been remarked, that there is no subject whose details are so insipid to a stranger as those of love-making; though, perhaps, nothing is more interesting to the parties themselves. As we are much disposed to concur in the accuracy of this statement, it will at once be sufficient for us to state, that the important process had been gone through, and the critical question answered by the guileless blushes of the fair Madeline.

But let not the reader suppose that Lord Avondale was the only suitor for her hand. Johnston, the Baron of Hilton, had also sought for it, but in vain. He was somewhat older than Avondale, and of a fiery and resentful disposition, which led him to nourish within his bosom feelings of the darkest kind against his successful rival. He, first of all, resorted to the lowest methods of vilifying Avondale in the eyes of his mistress; but the diabolical arti-

fices which he resorted to for effecting his purpose had become apparent even to her to whose mind suspicion was a stranger.

The people in the village looked upon the match between Avondale and Madeline as fixed, but, at the same time, most of them could not help regretting that the daughter of their master was about to be wedded to one so depraved as they had been led to consider Avondale, through the calumnious reports that Johnston caused to be circulated amongst them.

"Hech! wha would hae thocht that siccan a weel-faured, warm-hearted leddie as Miss Madeline wad hae had sae little regard for hersel' an' her faither's house, as to thraw awa hersel' an' her braw tocher on sic a rampagin', hare-brained, gude-for-naething as this young Avondale. I'm sure it's as weel that her puir leddy-mither's dead an' gane; for it wad hae broken her heart to hae seen her bairn sae far left to hersel' as to forgether wi' siccan a hard-hearted loon. Ye wad hear tell, nae doubt, o' his roupin' out ane o' his puir tenants in Loudon for no haeing his bit rent ready to pay him at St. Jude's day. I could maist wish a curse to fa' on his head, gin I thocht pairt o't wadna licht on Leddy Madeline, puir lassie, wha we're a' sae muckle beha'den to" —said Lucky Cruickshanks to a neighbour, who was seated with her at her "chimney nuik," discussing the gossip of the village.

"In troth," replied the other, "it's e'en a pity that siccan a bonny an' winsome lassie suld hae made sae puir a bargain, gin a' be true that ye say; but the word ye've gien, neebor, I maun tell ye, disna correspond ava wi' what he gets aboot his ain place, whar he's muckle lauded and respeckit."

"Haud ye there, cummer," interrupted Mrs. Cruickshanks, not a little piqued at the air of incredulity assumed by her visitor; "ye maun e'en ken that what I've tell't ye anent the roupin' o' the puir body's guids and chattels, is something mair than an auld wife's haver, sin' it was tell't to my guidman by nae less a body than the Laird o' Hilton hissel'—tak' ye that, cummer!"

"The Laird o' Hilton!" repeated the other, with an ill-disguised air of triumph; "an' think ye, what ye tell me's

the mair likely to be true, that it's come frae his mouth? Hae ye nae mair sense than to believe that the laird wad slack his tongue to uphaud the man that's won the leddy ower his head; nae sic thing, my woman—the laird's no the man; an' I hae guid reason to think that, gin the truth was kend, Hilton's at the bottom o' a' thir stories that are fleein' about o' young Avondale."

"Sae ye're nae better than the lave—I took ye to hae been a person o' mair sense and discretion," retorted the other, whose pique had now assumed an aspect bordering upon anger—"ye're like the lave, neebor — there's nae reason in ye—mair by token that ye opine that the hale acts o' a man's life are to be judged by a single deed. Think ye, lass, that 'cause he freed frae the claws o' justice a thieving cut-throat, Rob o' the Muirs, wha, nae doubt, had lifted nae sma' bouk o' his nowt, that he's aye to be the same compassionate man? It's a' ye ken about it, cummer, it's a' ye ken," said she, at the same time rising from her seat, and recommencing some household operations which she had left off upon the entrance of her acquaintance. The latter forthwith withdrew, observing her temper somewhat ruffled, adding, as she wished her "guid e'en," that "time wad tell whilk o' the twa was i' the richt."

The obstinacy with which Lucky Cruickshanks had resisted any favourable impression being made on her mind regarding the young suitor of Madeline, was rather to be attributed to a natural inherent feeling of self-consequence which prevented her from acknowledging anything as new, which emanated from one whom she considered so far below her in intellectual capacity, as her neighbour, than to any particular aversion that she entertained against him. It must be observed, however, that the inhabitants of Roecleugh generally had a decided predilection in favour of Johnston, which induced them to consider him as by far the most suitable husband for their young mistress. The calumniating reports spread abroad by the latter, in prejudice to his rival, and the undoubted superiority he enjoyed in point of wealth, afford the only way of accounting for this; for, in every other respect, he was incomparably surpassed by Lord Avondale; or, perhaps, the dignified, or, as they supposed it, haughty bearing of the latter

might have prevented him from gaining that place in their estimation, which the affability of his rival had procured.

Such was the state of affairs at Roecleugh, and such the estimation in which the respective suitors for Madeline's hand were held, when it became generally circulated that the nuptials between the young heiress of Roecleugh and Lord Avondale were on the point of being consummated.

Before spreading abroad the calumnious reports by which he had endeavoured to blast the reputation of his rival, the Baron of Hilton had become well aware, from the reception he had uniformly met with from Madeline, that there remained no prospect, even the most distant, of her ever consenting to be his bride. Still he had endeavoured to lull his feelings, by the hope that Avondale would not succeed in winning the hand of her on whom he had resolutely, though in vain, set his affections. It was on a Saturday evening, when carousing with a party of convivial acquaintances in the mansion-house of Hilton, that Johnston first became acquainted with this, to him, startling fact.

"And sae," said a farmer, who was one of his boon-companions, "it's true enough, after a', that Lord Avondale's to be buckled to the fair rose of Roecleugh. The wedding, I'm gien to understand, is fixed for Monday week; and rich and mony are the braws that hae been ordered frae the Edinburgh milliners: my conscience! they say there's as muckle coming out as 'll fill Pate Thamson's twa double carts."

Johnston heard these sayings of his visiter, as will readily be supposed, with feelings of no very pleasing description, but struggled hard to suppress any outward demonstration of his mental emotion. Immediately seizing the bottle which stood before him upon the table, he replenished his glass to the rim, and as quickly swallowed its contents, apparently with the view of drowning the galling sensations with which wounded pride and enmity had filled his breast. The departure of his visitors, which did not take place till a very late, or rather early hour, imparted no alleviation to his distracted feelings. Wild and sleepless, he paced backward and forward in his chamber; at intervals, vainly attempting to allay the agony of his spirit by renewed applications to

the wine-flask. But such means, he, like many before and after him, found inadequate to

> "Minister unto a mind diseased;
> Or pluck from the heart a rooted sorrow."

In this wretched state did he continue till the following morning, when he was aroused from his frantic reveries by the bustle occasioned by the country people on their way to the church. In a state of madness, he resolved to seek there, for his mental sufferings, a mitigation which he had sought for in vain within the walls of his own dwelling. Accordingly, wrapping his cloak around him, he hastened thither, and seated himself in a pew immediately in front of the pulpit. The appearance of his features, agitated by his internal emotions, as well as by the means which he had resorted to for quelling them, exhibited a striking contrast to the calm and serene expression of face borne by the rustics who sat around him contented and happy.

At length an aged and venerable man stalked up the aisle, entered the pulpit, and *gave out* the psalm. He was Daniel Douglas, who, with Sir Patrick Hume, the celebrated knight of Polwarth, had been obliged to abdicate his charge and seek refuge for some years in Holland, during the evil days of the persecution; but whom the more tranquil period subsequent to the Revolution had reinstated in the pastoral charge of the parish of Hilton. He was a staunch and unbending advocate of the rules and doctrines of what was called the Reformed religion, which he had boldly asserted and defended, when to have done so was considered a crime.

The psalm sung and the prayer ended, "Come unto me, all ye who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," was the text announced by the venerable parson. "You lie," exclaimed his abandoned patron, at the same time rising from his seat; but almost immediately reassuming it—"You can give no rest—no rest."

For a moment the divine lifted his eyes from the page of the sacred volume which was spread out before him, and directed them toward the individual who had so indecorously interrupted him; but almost instantly he repeated in a yet louder and more emphatic tone, the words which had given

rise to the interruption. The rustic audience did not, however, so speedily recover from their surprise, but in silent wonderment continued to gaze upon the laird.

"There be," said the preacher, commencing his discourse, "divers classes of individuals unto whom the words which I have just now read unto you from the holy book are addressed. Some be there, who, overwhelmed with the cares and sorrows of this transitory scene, and finding here below no place of refuge from the fury of the tempest that has gathered around them, in the spirit of meekness and of humility, come unto Him who is both able and willing to rescue them; others be there, who, thwarted in their vain schemes of ambition or of pelf, with the leaven of passion or of pride still rankling in their breasts, impiously resort to Him for succour."

Scarcely had these words passed from the lips of the speaker, before the door of the pew in which Johnston was seated was flung violently open, and its occupant darting across the passage, flew up the pulpit stair, grasped the preacher by the throat, and, in another moment, dashed his head with such violence against the desk as caused the blood to flow forth in a copious stream from his nostrils. At this juncture, the whole congregation rose hurriedly from their seats, and several individuals sprang forward to rescue their minister from the hands of his infuriated assailant. The latter was no sooner secured, than Daniel Douglas, composedly wiping away with his napkin the blood with which his mouth was besmeared, turned towards Johnston, and, in an emphatic tone, exclaimed aloud:—

"Unhappy man! unto this holy sanctuary which thou hast now irreverently profaned, shall thy mangled carcase be brought, not many days hence; yea, the very dogs shall lap thy heart's blood from the floor."

The morrow's dawn found the Baron of Hilton threading his intricate way up one of the longest and narrowest defiles in the range of the Lammermuir mountains. In its bottom flowed a small brook, here and there impeded, in its onward course, by huge and ungainly masses of rock, which, in the lapse of years, had been hurled down from the lofty cliffs by which it was overhung. At last, the baron paused, and, looking upward to one of those craggy

steeps, the summit of which was clothed with the dense foliage of the stunted birch and dwarf oak, he drew forth from beneath his cloak a small bugle-horn, and made the wild echoes of the glen respond to its wild music. Three times had the blast been repeated, when the figure of a man appeared, crouching behind the foliage at the top of the cliff, reconnoitring the individual who had intruded himself so near his solitary abode. Apparently satisfied with the result of his scrutiny, he stood up erect, and displayed a tall athletic figure, which at the place from which it was viewed by the other, corresponded exactly with the ordinary description of a giant. He was attired in a tight, close, party-coloured dress, formed of the skins of hares, and the other furry tenants of the bleak region in which he lived; and the rays of the morning sun, which had now begun to peep forth above the hills, were reflected from the clear hilt of a dagger, stuck in a belt that surrounded his waist. He beckoned the baron to approach towards the base of the cliff, and commenced lowering down a strong rope or cable, to the end of which was suspended a swing seat. Hilton having seated himself in it, was quickly raised by means of a revolving lever, to the ledge of rock that protruded at the feet of the robber—for such was the calling of the individual whom he had gone to visit. His countenance bore an expression of haughtiness that indicated the utter contempt in which he held the laws and their administrators. During several years of the earlier part of his life, he had served as a private soldier in the persecuting ranks of the bloody Claverhouse, whom he had beheld expire in the arms of victory at the Pass of Killiecrankie. After the annihilation of the Stuart dynasty, he had abandoned the profession of a soldier, though we cannot add that he had also laid aside that of arms. Retiring to this wild region of the Lammermuirs, he had sought out for himself a suitable lurking-place, whence he occasionally sallied forth and levied unwilling contributions from the lairds and farmers of the Merse.

Many attempts had been made to seize Rob o' the Muirs —the name by which he was usually called—but all of these, with two exceptions, had proved unavailing. On these occasions, which occurred upon his first commencing

the profession of freebooter, his spoliations being of a comparatively venial description to those which he had latterly been in the habit of carrying on, he had been suffered to escape. He had once, as was adverted to by Lucky Cruickshanks, been detected in the act of driving away several heads of cattle from the lands of Avondale castle; and, after being firmly bound and lustily belaboured by the rustics, had been thrust into an out-house for the night. But he had been released from this state of "durance vile," by Lord Avondale, who was then a boy, and had wished to enjoy their amazement, when they should go, on the following morning, to carry him off to jail, at finding that he had escaped. At another time, he had been arraigned at Jedburgh for highway robbery, committed on the person of a Lammermuir laird; but, from some flaw in the indictment, and the interference of some persons, among whom was the Baron of Hilton, in his behalf, he had also been acquitted, and suffered to return to his lawless vocation.

In strict justice to Rob, it must be added, that the acquisition of *spuilzie*, rather than the perpetration of acts of bloodshed, was his exciting object; though it will readily be supposed, that, in the course of his long practice as a freebooter, occasions must have occurred when he had found it expedient, from a regard to his own safety, or to insure the successful accomplishment of his object, to *kittle* underneath the ribs with his poignard, or send a bullet unceremoniously whizzing through the head of a refractory drover.

The baron had no sooner disengaged himself from the apparatus by which he had been swung up to the mouth of the bandit's cave, than the latter thus addressed him:—

"To what good fortune, Laird of Hilton, am I to consider myself indebted for so early and unexpected a visit from you? But I forget—the mist of these wild hills must have sharpened your lowland appetite."

So saying, he crouched himself downwards, and bidding his visitor follow his example, he disappeared through a narrow aperture which led into his rude citadel. It was a large and irregularly-shaped cavern, obscurely lighted by a lamp that was suspended from its roof. Along one of its sides was a range of seats, composed of a number of layers of

turf piled alternately one above another; and in the centre of the apartment was a sort of table, constructed of the same material, over which was inverted the dried skin of a bullock. The walls glistened with swords, pistols, and pieces of armour of various descriptions; and in one of the corners was suspended the red military cloak which had been worn by Rob when a soldier during the civil wars. In a recess at its farther extremity, lay, stretched out upon some hides that supplied the place of a mattress, the individual who took charge of the garrison when the robber was engaged in his midnight spoliations.

"Had the sun not been so far up, I would have treated you to some warm refreshment for breakfast; but smoke, you know, is not the most fitting thing that can be seen issuing from the mansion of a gentleman of my profession," said the robber, smiling; "you will therefore have to make what cheer you can upon such cold provender as I may be able to set before you."

"I can eat none, Rob," said Johnston; "so you may spare yourself the trouble of bringing forth any of your viands. You talked of the mists of the hills having given me an appetite—they have not; let me try what effect may be produced by a cup of your own purer mountain dew, which, I guess, that huge bottle beside you contains."

"And that you shall quickly have," said the other, producing the bottle and a large wooden drinking cup or *quegh*, which he filled up with its contents, and wishing his visitor "health and happiness," drank it off. Then filling up the cup again, he handed it to the other, who, before draining it, said:—

"You have drunk health and happiness to me, Rob—will you bring out another of your cups, and, in a bumper, pledge me that you will lend me a helping hand in the accomplishment of what alone can insure to me either of these blessings?"

"That will I do cheerily," replied the freebooter, at the same time rising from his seat in quest of another vessel; "do you doubt me, man? I have not so soon forgot the good word you spoke for me at the Jeddart court, when I was like to have got a trip beyond seas, merely for having

helped myself to a few golden portraits of his Majesty from the laird of Stobswood's leather purse, when I first began business for myself. No; Rob has not let that good turn slip so suddenly from his memory."

"Well, then," said the other, when his entertainer had once more seated himself and plenished his cup to the brim, "you have heard of Lord Avondale, who"——

"I have; and a better young fellow, barring yourself, does not call himself master of an acre of land between the Tweed and the Forth," interrupted the bandit.

"Well," continued Johnston, impatiently; "but you know that he has stepped in between me and Madeline of Roecleugh. The wedding is fixed for Monday week, and I have resolved that it shall never take place. I have now come to ask your assistance in putting a stop to it."

"How and by what means, then, do you purpose to carry your threat into execution? By carrying off the wench, eh? and keeping her shut up like a caged lark, in your old ghostly mansion down by, till such time as she consent to accept the Baron of Hilton for her mate? If that be what you wish, then will I lend you a helping hand, provided you will promise me that there is to be no bloodshed in the way."

"You have guessed my intentions with wonderful exactness, Rob," answered the other; "but more or less bloodshed there must be, for how otherwise would it be possible to get Madeline forced from the castle, occupied as it will now be, by a numerous host of friends and kinsmen who will have assembled to be present at the bridal?"

"Leave that to me," replied the robber; "only promise me that you will keep your sword buried in its scabbard, and you shall have Madeline, as you call her, mounted behind you on your horse ere another week goes round. Come now, pledge me that Avondale shall be safe, or, by my troth, I won't stir a foot in the business."

"I pro—mise, then," drawled forth the baron, reluctantly, at the same time grasping the proffered hand of Rob o' the Muirs; "and, in event of your managing the matter as successfully as you have said, I will cheerfully give you what gold you may be pleased to ask from me for your good services."

"A bargain be it, then," replied his companion. "You say the wedding is to be on Monday week—hold yourself in readiness waiting for me on that day, about nightfall, among the ruins of the old nunnery at St. Bathan's; and then, else my name's not Rob, will I deliver into your hands Madeline of Roecleugh. But forget not to bring with you your fleetest steed, as there is chance of a hot pursuit."

We must now leave this worthy couple to arrange matters for the capture of Madeline, and request the reader to accompany us back to Roecleugh, where active preparations had, for some time previous, been making for the approaching nuptials. Many of the friends of Sir George Douglas had, as Johnston conjectured, arrived at the castle, where the greater part of the day was spent in the amusements of the field, and the evening in festivity. Avondale was also there; and, as might naturally be supposed, the greater part of the time which he could contrive to snatch from the company of the other visitors, was devoted to that of his young bride. But, while such was the state of affairs at the castle, the inhabitants of the village were not idle. Though the match scarcely accorded with their wishes, now that they saw that it was finally fixed upon, they contended with each other who should be the most forward in evincing their respect and attachment to their young mistress. A meeting was forthwith *called*, to be held in the shop of Jasper Middlemass, the blacksmith, for the purpose of taking into consideration what would be the most suitable method of demonstrating their feelings upon the occasion. At the appointed hour, not only the male dignitaries of the village, but likewise the greater part of their wives, crowded together within the walls of the smithy. Their children also congregated in noisy groups around the door, and not a few annoyed the members of the assembly, by thrusting their bare heads through between their legs, with a view of seeing, or rather hearing, what was to be done. Silence being called and procured, on the motion of Peter Purdie the tailor, the parochial schoolmaster, Gabriel Whackum, was unanimously called to the chair, or rather stithy, for such was the only seat of honour that the place of convention afforded. Accordingly, having mounted the rostrum,

the individual in question, who was a tall, thin, sallow-complexioned man, after a few introductory *hems*, and having assumed such a look of importance as the occasion demanded, proceeded to address the audience nearly in the same words as follow :—

"My friends and fellow-townsfolk," he said—"it appeareth from sundry passages in the ancient writers, that the Greeks and Romans were wont to celebrate their matrimonial alliances with the voice of festivity and rejoicing; as is apparent from Tenocrates, page 162, as also from the writings of Theophastus (Screvilius' edition), at page 56, nigh unto the bottom thereof. The same custom, moreover, obtained among the Jews of old, as the beginning of the second chapter of the Gospel according to St. John doth also truly evince. A practice thus universal and ancient, it little behoveth us, in these present times, to let fall into desuetude, the more especially as sundry whom I behold here present have been singularly beholden unto the virgin who is about to be wedded, when placed in great straits and jeopardy by reason of lack of sustenance. But while I hold it to be laudable for you to show forth unto the world some public testimonial of your esteem, I would, at the same time, counsel you against letting loose your reins unto drunkenness, the which lowereth a man even unto a level with the beasts of the field. Also touching the matter of the barrel of ale, which the consideration of Sir George hath sent, to enable us the better to keep up the hilarity of the occasion, I would take it upon me to suggest that, on the evening whereon the nuptials are to be solemnised, the said cask—'*diota sabina*,' as Horatius Flaccus would have called it—should be deposited in the charge of three trustworthy persons, to be elected by a majority of the suffrages of the assembly, the same to be empowered to mete out in due moities unto every man his equable share of liquor. And lastly, my friends, I may add that any one who may have a motion to bring forward shall be listened to, on my part, with all due attention."

The assembled villagers looked with pride upon the dominie whose

> "Words of learned length and thundering sound,
> Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around;

And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew."

A minute elapsed before any one opened his mouth to speak. At length Simon Littlejohn, the ruling elder, a man of diminutive stature, and a weaver by profession, raising his head to a proper level, by suspending himself upon the shoulders of those between whom he was crushed, in a speech of some length, moved, that, on the night in question, a large bonfire should be lighted on the top of Dirrington Law, that "the hale warld," as he expressed it, "atween John o' Groat's and the Land's End micht ken the young leddy o' Roecleugh had been that nicht buckled to Lord Avondale."

This motion was cordially seconded and agreed to. It was also arranged that, a little before the hour appointed for the celebration of the nuptials, the villagers, dressed in their best attire, should convene before the gate of the castle and there form themselves into a procession, to escort the bride to the chapel. Agreeably to the proposition advanced by Mr Whackum, the barrel of ale was formally consigned over to the charge of three members of the meeting, himself among the number, and it was resolved that it should be dispensed to them in the schoolhouse after the marriage ceremony had been gone through. These important arrangements being concluded, the meeting was dissolved by the president, and the villagers proceeded to depart, every one "unto his own dwelling."

It has been already remarked that the knight of Roecleugh and his daughter were Catholics. This fact will explain to the reader why the nuptials were appointed to be celebrated, not in the parish church, as usual, but within the walls of an old Catholic chapel, of Gothic architecture, which stood upon a patch of haugh land, about three hundred yards further down the rivulet than the steep whereon the castle was reared. It had formerly been the parish church; but, at the Reformation, having suffered not more from time than from the destructive ravages of the modern Vandals, it was allowed to fall into decay, and its place was supplied by a modern building erected in the neighbourhood of the village. The ecclesiastic, by whom the

marriage ceremony was to be gone through, was the aged Catholic priest, formerly noticed as the individual to whom the superintendence of Madeline's education had been assigned.

It was now about the middle of November, and the weather, which had previously been mild and settled, became suddenly broken up. For several days the snow-flakes continued to descend in copious showers, so as to clothe the hills with a white mantle of several feet in depth. The day appointed for the wedding was, however, serene and beautiful; and the feathered tenants of the moorland groves twittered joyfully upon the leafless sprays, apparently in anticipation that the storm was at an end. Towards evening, the visitors assembled at the castle were summoned into the hall to partake of some refreshment, previous to accompanying the bride and bridegroom to the chapel.

Madeline alone did not attend, but remained seated at her chamber window, musingly gazing upon the stars which were already beginning to peep out from above the summits of the Lammermuirs. She had not sat long ere a bustling noise, followed by a loud groan, which proceeded from the court-yard beneath, recalled her from her reveries. She rose from her seat, and on looking downwards, to her horror and amazement, beheld the body of one of the pages, bloody and lifeless, stretched out upon the pavement, and a man, muffled in a huge cloak, making his way upwards to her apartment by a ladder. Her first effort was to scream and bring the inmates of the castle to her assistance, but terror divested her of the power, and she sank back into her chair in a state of insensbility.

The sash of the window was violently thrown open, and the intruder entered. Stripping himself of the cloak in which his person had been enveloped, he flung it rudely around the insensible Madeline, and, lifting her in his arms, he conveyed her from the apartment by the same way in which he had obtained access to it.

The villagers had assembled in front of the gateway, and the repast in the hall had just been finished, when the castle bell tolled the hour of six. As the sound died away,

the priest arose from his seat, and, addressing a matron who sat at the foot of the table, he said—"The hour appointed for the bridal hath come, the wedding guests are ready convened, I pray thee let the virgin be brought forth, that we may proceed unto St. Agnes's chapel, to solemnise the nuptials."

Hereupon the matron withdrew, followed by several of the female visitors. Many minutes had not elapsed when Mr Morris, the butler, entered, with a pale and agitated countenance, and announced that Madeline was nowhere to be found—that the casement of her window had been found thrown wide open, and a ladder planted against it from the court-yard beneath. It would require a much more vivid pencil than ours to pourtray the expression which the countenances of all present assumed upon this announcement being made to them. All rose up hurriedly from their seats—some applying their hands menacingly to the hilts of their swords, while others paced hurriedly to and fro upon the floor, in vain endeavouring to account for the disappearance of the bride. No sooner, however, had the astounding intelligence been brought, than the bewildered bridegroom rushed from the hall, and fruitlessly searched every apartment in the castle in quest of his fair one. Failing in his object, he hurried to the stables, and, seizing the first horse that presented itself, he mounted it, and galloped frantically across the moor. The rest of the visitors were also quickly mounted and on the pursuit, and Roecleugh Castle was that night destitute of male occupants.

"Didna I tell ye that nae luck could come out o' Leddy Madeline takin' up wi' siccan a scape-grace as this Lord Avondale?" said Lucky Cruickshanks, forcing her way through the crowd of astounded villagers, and grasping the arm of her acquaintance, whose conversation with her in the village some time previous we have related at the commencement of our tale. "Didna I tell ye that marrying him was nae better nor thrawin' hersel' awa? but ye wadna believe till the truth's been bored into yer vera een. But the puir lassie's come to the same thocht as mysel' at the hinder end, and taen leg bail for it, I'se warrant. What hae ye to say about the made-up reports noo, cummer?"

About the same time that Madeline was discovered to be

amissing at the castle, the Baron of Hilton rode up the vale of Whitadder toward the ruins of the Abbey of St. Bathan's, an ancient Bernardine convent, which was the place that had been agreed upon for his meeting with Rob o' the Muirs. Having secured his horse to an iron stanchel which protruded from the wall of what had been the transept, he had paced beneath the broken arches for some time, his mind agitated by a tumult of discordant feeling, when a suppressed note from a bugle apprised him that the robber was at hand. In about a minute, the latter rode into the ruins, bearing before him the apparently inanimate body of Madeline Sinclair.

"You see Rob is no man to break his promise to a friend," said he, as he deposited his burden upon the pavement. "Let me see now how many of your gold boys you're going to give me for the good turn I've done you; but you must needs be quick about it, else we'll have the hounds upon us, and the snow is not the best carpet for a man to tread upon in a moonlight night, who does not wish his way to be known."

"Take all you can find there, and you shall have more for the asking," said Hilton, throwing him his purse; and at the same time stooping down and removing the cloak from the pale face of the lady—"by Heavens, she is dead!"

"Perhaps a tasting of my pure mountain dew, as you call it, will bring her to life again," said the bandit, laughing; and untying from around his neck a leathern flask, similar to what is now carried by sportsmen and anglers, and then putting it to Madeline's mouth.

A distant halloo now broke upon their ears. Hilton lifted the lady in his arms, and both hurried to the place where their horses were fastened; and in a few minutes they were galloping over the moor, as fast as the snow would allow, in a direction opposite to that whence the sound seemed to proceed. Thus they had travelled for a considerable distance, when the horses became unable to go farther for the drifted snow. Hilton then dismounted, and consigning Madeline to the care of the freebooter, plunged on, as best he could, in a direction in which the latter assured him he would find a shepherd's hut, where he might take refuge

for the night. Scrambling forward with great difficulty to the summit of an eminence, he at length descried a light proceeding from the small window, or bole, of the mud-built cot; in the interior of which the *guidman* and his wife were seated by the side of a blazing fire of peats, engaged in the following conversation :—

"There's mony a puir body waur off than huz the nicht, Eppy, my woman," said the guidman, glancing cheerfully around the little room, every corner of which was illumined by the blaze of the peats. "They may ca' this the deil's den gin they like; but gin the deil hae but as snug a berth as this in a cauld winter nicht, I'm thinking he'll be no that ill off."

"Ay, ay, Robin, my man, mony a ane, that's true, hasna siccan a cozy fire to roast their taes at afore they tumble in; and mony a ane that has a bigger, disna feel sae happy and contented," responded Eppy, at the same time drawing the cutty stool nearer to the joyful hearth.

"I'm doubting we'll hae a stormy winter after a'," said Robin—"it's set in sae sune; and we've had sic mild anes sin' our Bauldy was born, an' that'll be sax years come the time. Hech! that was an awfu' storm—the hale road atween Dunse and Embro' was blockit up for the best feck o' twa months: I'll ne'er forget that mornin' when I rase to drive our farrow cow to Lauder Fair, how queer I lookit when I saw the snaw maist up to the easin' o' the house."

"I mind weel about it, now that ye speak o't—it was the very same winter that Rob o' the Muirs was catched liftin' Lord Avondale's nowt, that there was sic a clishma-claver about. Odd, wasna it daft-like to let siccan a reivin' monster 'scape, after gettin' him into their clutches?"

"I'll no say but what ye're richt, Eppy," responded Robin,' "but grit folks have queer ways o' doin.' Reivin' loun as Rob is, howsomever, we maun e'en say this muckle for him, that he's never laid his reivin' paw on onything belangin' to huz. But what's garrin Whalp bark that gate!"

"It canna be Tam Inglis bringin' o'er the tatties siccan a nicht as this—no 'deed, it canna be Tam, for Whalp wadna said a word to him. Kennel up, ye deevil ye."

By this time a loud knocking was heard at the door; and

Robin rising from his seat, and seizing a piece of rudely shaped wood, which served as an apology for a candlestick, proceeded towards the door, to ascertain the cause of the disturbance. After some questions put and apparently satisfactorily answered from without, Robin undid the latch of the door, and the Baron of Hilton entered. With some scruples, Robin was induced to put on his big coat, and accompany the latter with his lighted lanthorn to the spot where he had left the lady and the freebooter, to assist them in disengaging their horses from the drift. With considerable difficulty, this was accomplished, and the latter led into Robin's cow byre, and Madeline, in a state of utter insensibility, deposited in a chair by the side of the fire. "Lord hae mercy on us! what's ailin' the puir lassie?" exclaimed Eppy, holding the candle, and gazing on the pallid features of Madeline of Roecleugh.

The circumstances being explained to her as arising from the fatigue of her journey and the extreme cold, the guidwoman put the kettle on the fire, with the intention of preparing a posset which she had often before found serviceable on similar occasions; while the others endeavoured to restore circulation, by rubbing the palms of her hands before the fire. This they had continued for some time apparently without any effect, when, suddenly, with a convulsive throb, the lady opened her eyes and stared wildly around her; she almost immediately, however, relapsed into her former state of insensibility, and the others had recommenced operations for her restoration, when the sound of several voices was heard at the outside of the door, followed by a thundering blow upon the window-shutter. Hilton dropped the lady's hand which he was chafing, and, guessing the cause of the interruption, he unsheathed his sword, and planted himself in a determined posture behind the door, while Rob of the Muirs, with an air of greater composure, proceeded to adjust his fire-arms before the very face of the terrified Eppy.

Immediate entrance was demanded from without. Robin stood hesitating as to the expediency of opening the door, when the robber hinted to him, by a significant glance at his firelock, that it would be at his peril to budge from the spot where he stood—a hint which the shepherd did not

think fit to misunderstand. A second application being also unattended to, the door was forcibly burst open, and two men rushed violently into the room; while, at the same moment, a bullet from the bandit's carbine penetrated the shoulder of the first that entered. A desperate struggle ensued, which lasted for some minutes, and promised to have turned out favourably for Hilton and his coadjutor, when a reinforcement on the part of Lord Avondale—for he it was who had first rushed into the house, and received the bullet of the robber in his shoulder—entirely changed the aspect of affairs. Rob, after discharging his carbine, had continued for some time to employ the butt end of it with considerable success, and had once more raised it with the intention of bringing it into vehement contact with the cranium of one of his now numerous assailants, when a successful slash from the cutlass of another sent his weapon, and the hand that wielded it, in social company to the ground. The two rival suitors, in the meantime, had not been inactive, when a shot from one of the party stretched Johnston upon the floor. The serious privation which the robber had met with in the loss of his hand had not so effectually dispirited him as to have prevented him from inflicting, with a stool which he snatched from the floor with his remaining member, considerable molestation on the persons of those who, at this crisis, rushed forward to secure him. His efforts at resistance, as might have been expected, were unable to withstand, for any length of time, the superior numerical force of his antagonists. He was at length overpowered, and being firmly bound, he was dragged to the cow-house, and five or six of his opponents stationed as a guard upon him for the night.

During this scene of confusion, Eppy, with her help-mate, had prudently ensconced themselves behind the wooden panel of the bed. There they stood, locked in each other's embraces, in momentary expectation of a lodgment being effected by a bullet in one or other of their persons; nor did it require a small degree of persuasion to induce them, when the conflict was at an end, to venture forth from the covert of their "wooden walls."

While the rest of the pursuers were contending with their antagonists. Sir George Sinclair hung mournfully over the

body of his swooning daughter, whose head he supported upon his shoulder.

The baron, who lay groaning at the entrance of the apartment, was, with his confederate, deposited upon some straw in the cowhouse. One of those who carried him out, perceiving the copious jets of blood that issued from his side, was proceeding to arrest the hemorrhage, by applying a napkin tightly round his waist, when the wounded man, over whose eyeballs the lowered lanthorn exhibited the film of death fast gathering, asked, in broken accents, whether Avondale and Madeline yet lived.

"I fear thou hast done for them," answered one of the servants.

"Then shall I die content," muttered the baron, his eye for a moment brightening up, but immediately resuming its lack-lustre appearance. "Madeline of Roecleugh can never be the bride of Lord Avondale."

On the forenoon of the ensuing day, Rob o' the Muirs, after making several bold but unsuccessful attempts to escape from the custody of the persons who conveyed him thither, was firmly secured with iron fetters in a dungeon below the prison house of Dunse, to await trial for his numerous breaches of the law. A messenger was, at the same time, dispatched to Hilton, to inform his retainers of their master's situation. In the afternoon, a number of the latter arrived at Robin's cottage, and proceeded to carry homeward on a litter his bloody and lifeless body. When they had reached within a few miles of the mansion house, a heavy snow-fall, which had continued for some time, rendered the roads, previously bad enough, almost impassable. Attaching a rope to the end of the litter, and each taking hold of it, the men had continued to plunge forward, dragging the corpse over the surface of the snow till they reached the wall of Hilton churchyard. In a state of exhaustion, they resolved to deposit their burden within the church all night, as they felt too wearied to allow of their proceeding onward to the house, which stood about half a mile to the eastward. They accordingly raised the body from the bier and deposited it in the same pew of the church which its wretched owner had occupied and profanely violated on the Sunday of the preceding week. As

they did so, the bandage slipped from off the wound, and a large mass of coagulated blood fell upon the floor, which was immediately seized and gobbled up by the hungry hounds that had been following at their master's heels: and thus were the prophetic words of Daniel Douglas verified.

Many weeks elapsed ere Madeline of Roecleugh evinced symptoms of returning sensibility; and even after these had become apparent, the slightest unguarded allusion to the scenes of the eventful bridal night invariably occasioned an alarming relapse. About a week had elapsed afterwards, when it was discovered that one of the grooms belonging to the castle had abetted Rob o' the Muirs in his successful attempt at carrying off the young heiress; and what was worse, had stabbed one of his fellow-servants who had detected Rob when on his way up the ladder to his mistress's apartment. He was immediately, upon the discovery being made, apprehended and committed to prison.

The wound which Avondale's shoulder had sustained by the bullet from the robber's carbine, turned out to be of a much more serious nature than had been at first expected. Perceiving the lamentable state in which Madeline was, he had returned to Avondale Castle, where he had no sooner arrived, than acute febrile symptoms followed by delirium supervened.

A couple of months had elapsed, when the physicians who attended upon Madeline, recommended a change of air and of scene, as the means best calculated for the restoration of her health and spirits; and the small village of Eyemouth upon the coast—then a more fashionable resort on such occasions than it happens to be at the present day—was the place where Sir George and his invalid daughter took up their abode for the purpose of enjoying these benefits. They had been for some weeks absent from Roecleugh, when Avondale, finding his strength sufficiently recruited to permit of his leaving his chamber, returned thither to visit them. He found the castle almost wholly deserted; Morris the butler, and the old housekeeper being its sole occupants. After the murder of their comrade, on the evening appointed for the bridal, the servants had, one by one, re-

signed their posts. The idea which then prevailed throughout Scotland, that the spots where murder had been perpetrated, must, of necessity, become haunted by the spirits of the deceased, had so effectually overcome their courage, that they had refused positively to remain longer in a dwelling where such supernatural appearances were likely to be manifested. The housekeeper was still assisted in the performance of the more menial operations, 'tis true, by one of the peasants' daughters, who, tempted by the goodly usage which the old lady held out to her as an inducement, had enlisted into the service, under the express provision that she should not be required to remain within the castle after sunset—the time at which the evil spirits first became visible.

Morris having conducted his lordship into the hall, proceeded to apologise to him in statements which will not admit of a very close scrutiny, for the absence of the other domestics. Having requested him to supply him with writing materials for the purpose of preparing a packet for his master, he also asked him whether he thought it possible for him to procure a messenger to convey it to him.

"Easy that—easy that, my lord," readily replied the butler; "there's hunders ready to rin up to the neck i' the Whitadder, at your honour's biddin', and think it a favour to be asked—there need be nae lack o' messengers, gude truly. And immediately he left the hall, and taking in his hand a silver-mounted cane, proceeded to the cottage of one Peter Treddles, whose oldest son, a lad of about fifteen years of age, he pitched upon as an eligible individual for despatching upon the embassy.

The family were busily engaged in discussing their four-hours, when the tapping of Morris' cane upon the door arrested a large hornspoonful on its way to Peter's throat. His eyes were instantly elevated from his bicker toward the door, as the butler entered, while the children scampered out in various directions, to hide themselves from one so intimately connected with the haunted mansion.

"Oh! it's you, Maister Morris," ejaculated Mrs. Treddles. "I'm clean sorry yer honour suld hae ca'd and seen our house

in siccan a confusion; but the bairns mak' siccan a slaister and dirt, that it's no easy keepin' a'thing as ane could wush, sir."

"Your house is to a marvel, lucky," said the important personage addressed; and then turning to Peter, he inquired, "Do ye think yer auldest callant, Peter, could gang east the length of Eyemouth wi' a bit parcel for the laird?"

"Our callant," said Peter, turning round embarrassedly toward his wife, who usually spoke for him on important occasions like the present—"our callant's no very weel the noo, Maister Morris."

"I'm sorry for that," replied the other; "what may it be that's ailin' the bairn, puir thing?"

"Ye'll aiblins ken what an income is?" said Lucky Treddles, bustling forward from the cupboard where she had set aside some of the dinner utensils, the better to maintain the character which the butler had been pleased to give her house.

"Perfectly," answered the other.

"Weel, ye maun ken that the bairn's fashed wi' a maist tremendous ane in the heuch o' his knee; so I'm vexed that he'll no be able to do yer honour's service, Maister Morris; and it wad hae been siccan a braw job for him to hae walked doon to Eyemouth—ay, weel suld I ken Eyemouth—I've heard my puir auld mither, wha's been in the moulds this twenty year, say, as how it was a great place for catching fish, and how"—

Here Morris thought proper unceremoniously to break in upon Mrs. Treddles' reminiscences of her mother, by saying—"But, my guid woman, yer callant wadna need to walk a single fit o' the road, as he wad get Leddy Madeline's grey powny, to ride baith there and back again, and as muckle siller in his pouch as wad buy him a pair o' new shoon for Sundays."

"But I was just gaun to tell ye, when yer honour interrupted me," rejoined the guidwife, resolved in this emergency to stretch any point, even at the expense of truth itself, rather than allow her boy to go upon the mission—"that the puir callant's troubled wi' a bile upon the very pairt that wad be maist exposed to the saidle."

This argument against her son's being employed as an ambassador on the occasion, was, of course, unanswerable; and Morris withdrew, not, however, without a private doubt as to the urchin's bodily incapacity. Mortified with the result of his application to Lucky Treddles, he at last resolved to resort to the manse and solicit the minister, with whom he was not upon the best of terms, to allow the boy who took charge of his horse to set out upon the errand. Accordingly, he had proceeded in that direction for about fifty yards, when he observed a person kneeling by the side of the road. On approaching nearer, he discovered it to be his troublesome acquaintance, Sandy Watson—one of those good-natured idiots who are to be found in almost every neighbourhood. Sandy's peregrinations were usually confined within a circuit of one or two miles round Roecleugh; but the execution of Rob o' the Muirs, and his accomplice, Andrew Todd, the groom of Sir George Sinclair, had caused him on this occasion to exceed the usual limits by a journey of ten miles. When the poor idiot, therefore, recognised his friend Morris, he came running towards him, and cried out exultingly—

"Braw news the day—braw news the day frae Dunse, canny Maister Morris: Andrew Todd and Rob o' the Muirs are baith clean dead; and I'm gaun alang to tell the laird and the leddy a' about it."

"So ye've been seeing your acquaintance, Andrew, hanged," said Morris; and taking some silver from his pocket, and showing it to the idiot, he added—"A' that is to be gien, Sandy, to the person whom I am gaun to send upon a message."

Sandy's eyes glistened at the sight of the money; and Morris, perceiving that his plan had taken the desired effect, whispered to him—"Now, Sandy, gin ye'll walk straight doun to St. Bathan's—ye ken that place weel enough, I'm sure—and syne to Edincraw—that's where the auld witches lived, ye ken—and then speer the gate doon to Eyemouth, and deliver this letter into the laird's ain hand, ye shall hae a' that siller and a piece o' currant pasty when ye come back."

This proposal met with the most cordial acquiescence from

Sandy, who manifested his joy by a multitude of uncouth gestures and shrugs of his shoulders. Perhaps it might be considered tedious were we to describe the adventures which the idiot encountered on his journey; suffice it for us to say, that, on the evening of the second day from his departure, he succeeded in making his way into the presence of Sir George Sinclair, not without encountering great opposition from the servants, to whom he had doggedly refused to explain whence he had come, or what was the object of his visit. Having delivered the packet, he was remunerated in a manner much more ample than he had looked forward to, even as a reward for rehearsing the tragical events of the execution, till, at length, growing troublesome, Sir George rang the bell and ordered a servant to conduct him from the apartment. As the door was rudely slammed behind him, Sandy thrust his hands into his pockets, and muttered to himself—"I ay took the laird of Roecleugh to hae been a man o' mair manners than to hae used ane sae badly that had come sae far to see him. Sae muckle for my braw story;—but, puir man, I see the servants hae the upper hand o' him."

A few days had only elapsed after the ejection of Sandy, when Sir George Sinclair and the fair Madeline arrived at Roecleugh Castle, when the latter, in the course of the ensuing week, changed her name to that of Lady Avondale.

THE ADOPTED SON:

A TALE OF THE TIMES OF THE COVENANTERS.

H, for the sword of Gideon, to rid the land of tyrants, to bring down the pride of apostates, and to smite the ungodly with confusion," muttered John Brydone to himself, as he went into the fields in the September of 1645, and beheld that the greater part of a crop of oats, which had been cut down a few days before, was carried off. John was the proprietor of about sixty acres on the south bank of the Ettrick, a little above its junction with the Tweed. At the period we speak of, the talented and ambitious Marquis of Montrose, who had long been an apostate to the cause of the Covenant, and not only an apostate, but its most powerful enemy, having, as he thought, somewhat crushed its adherents in Scotland, in the pride of his heart led his followers towards England, to support the tottering cause of Charles in the south, and was now with his cavalry quartered at Selkirk, while his infantry were encamped at Philiphaugh, on the opposite side of the river.

Every reader has heard of Melrose Abbey—which is still venerated in its decay, majestic in its ruins; and they have read, too, of the abode of the northern wizard, who shed the halo of his genius over the surrounding scenery. But many have heard of Melrose, of Scott, and of Abbotsford, to whom the existence of Philiphaugh is unknown. It, however, is one of those places where our forefathers laid the foundation of our freedom with the bones of its enemies, and cemented it with their own blood. If the stranger who visits Melrose and Abbotsford pursue his journey a few miles

farther, he may imagine that he is still following the source of the Tweed, until he arrive at Selkirk, when he finds that for some miles he has been upon the banks of the Ettrick, and that the Tweed is lost among the wooded hills to the north. Immediately below Selkirk, and where the forked river forms a sort of island, on the opposite side of the stream, he will see a spacious haugh, surrounded by wooded hills, and forming, if we may so speak, an amphitheatre bounded by the Ettrick, between the Yarrow and the Tweed. Such is Philiphaugh; where the arms of the Covenant triumphed, and where the sword of Montrose was blunted for ever.

Now, the sun had not yet risen, and a thick, dark mist covered the face of the earth, when, as we have said, John Brydone went out into his fields, and found that a quantity of his oats had been carried away. He doubted not but they had been taken for the use of Montrose's cavalry; and it was not for the loss of his substance that he grieved, and that his spirit was wroth, but because it was taken to assist the enemies of his country, and the persecutors of the truth; for than John Brydone, humble as he was, there was not a more dauntless or a more determined supporter of the Covenant in all Scotland. While he yet stood by the side of his field, and, from the thickness of the morning, was unable to discern objects at a few yards distance, a party of horsemen made their appearance, and rode up to where he stood. "Countryman," said one who appeared to be their leader, "can you inform us where the army of Montrose is encamped?"

John, taking them to be a party of the Royalists, sullenly replied, "There's mony ane asks the road they ken," and was proceeding into the field.

"Answer me at once!" demanded the horseman angrily, and raising a pistol in his hand—"Sir David Lesly commands you."

"Sir David Lesly!" cried John, "the champion of the truth!—the defender of the good cause. If ye be Sir David Lesly, as I trow ye be, get yer troops in readiness, and, before the mist vanish on the river, I will deliver the host o' the Philistines into your hand."

"See that ye play not the traitor," said Lesly, "or the

nearest tree shall be unto thee as the gallows was to Haman which he prepared for Mordecai."

"Do even so to me, and more also," replied John, "if ye find me false. But think ye that I look as though I bore the mark of the beast upon my forehead?" he continued, taking off his Lowland bonnet and gazing General Lesly full in the face.

"I will trust you," said the General; and, as he spoke, the van of his army appeared in sight.

John having described the situation of the enemy to Sir David, acted as their guide until they came to the Shaw Burn, when the General called a halt. Each man having partaken of a hurried repast by order of Sir David, the word was given along the line that they should return thanks for being conducted to the place where the enemy of the Kirk and his army slept in imaginary security. The preachers at the head of the different divisions of the army gave out a psalm, and the entire host of the Covenanters, uncovering their heads, joined at the same moment in thanksgiving and praise. John Brydone was not a man of tears, but as he joined in the psalm, they rolled down his cheeks, for his heart felt, while his tongue uttered praise, that a day of deliverance for the people of Scotland was at hand. The psalm being concluded, each preacher offered up a short but earnest prayer; and each man, grasping his weapon, was ready to lay down his life for his religion and his liberty.

John Brydone, with his bonnet in hand, approaching Sir David, said—"Now, sir, I that ken the ground, and the situation o' the enemy, would advise ye, as a man who has seen some service mysel, to halve your men; let the one party proceed by the river to attack them on the one side, and the other go round the hills to cut off their retreat."*

"Ye speak skilfully," said Sir David, and he gave orders as John Brydone had advised.

The Marquis of Montrose had been disappointed in rein

* "But halve your men in equal parts,
Your purpose to fulfil;
Let ae half keep the water side,
The rest gae round the hill."
Battle of Philiphaugh—Border Ballad.

forcements from his sovereign. Of two parties which had been sent to assist him in his raid into England, one had been routed in Yorkshire, and the other defeated on Carlisle sands, and only a few individuals from both parties joined him at Selkirk. A great part of his Highlanders had returned home to enjoy their plunder; but his army was still formidable, and he imagined that he had Scotland at his feet, and that he had nothing to fear from anything the Covenanters could bring against him. He had been writing despatches throughout the night; and he was sitting in the best house in Selkirk, penning a letter to his sovereign, when he was startled by the sounds of cannon and of musketry. He rushed to the street, the inhabitants were hurrying from their houses—many of his cavalry were mingling, half-dressed, with the crowd. "To horse! —to horse!" shouted Montrose. His command was promptly obeyed; and, in a few moments, at the head of his cavalry, he rushed down the street leading to the river towards Philiphaugh. The mist was breaking away, and he beheld his army fleeing in every direction. The Covenanters had burst upon them as a thunderbolt. A thousand of his best troops lay dead upon the field. He endeavoured to rally them, but in vain; and, cutting his way through the Covenanters, he fled at his utmost speed, and halted not until he had arrived within a short distance of where the delightful watering town of Innerleithen now stands, when he sought a temporary resting-place in the house of Lord Traquair.

John Brydone, having been furnished with a sword, had not been idle during the engagement; but, as he had fought upon foot, and the greater part of Lesly's army were cavalry, he had not joined in the pursuit; and, when the battle was over, he conceived it to be as much his duty to act the part of the Samaritan, as it had been to perform that of a soldier. He was busied, therefore, on the field in administering, as he could, to the wounded; and whether they were Cavalier or Covenanter, it was all one to John; for he was not one who could trample on a fallen foe, and in their hour of need he considered all men as brothers. He was passing within about twenty yards of a tent upon the Haugh, which had a superior appearance to the others—it

was larger, and the cloth which covered it was of a finer quality; when his attention was arrested by a sound unlike all that belonged to a battle-field—the wailing and the cries of an infant! He looked around, and near him lay the dead body of a lady, and on her breast, locked in her cold arms, a child of a few months old was struggling. He ran towards them—he perceived that the lady was dead—he took the child in his arms—he held it to his bosom—he kissed its cheek—"Puir thing!—puir thing!" said John; "the innocent hae been left to perish amang the unrighteous." He was bearing away the child, patting its cheek—and caressing it as he went, and forgetting the soldier in the nurse, when he said unto himself—"Puir innocent!—an', belike, yer wrang-headed faither is fleeing for his life, an' thinking aboot ye an' yer mother as he flees! Weel, ye may be claimed some day, an' I maun do a' in my power to gie an account o' ye." So John turned back towards the lifeless body of the child's mother; and he perceived that she wore a costly ring upon her finger, and bracelets on her arms; she also held a small parcel, resembling a book, in her hands, as though she had fled with it, without being able to conceal it, and almost at the door of her tent she had fallen with her child in her arms, and her treasure in her hand. John stooped upon the ground, and he took the ring from her finger, and the bracelets from her arms; he took also the packet from her hands, and in it he found other jewels, and a purse of gold pieces. "These may find thee a faither, puir thing," said he; "or if they do not, they may befriend thee when John Brydone cannot."

He carried home the child to his own house, and his wife had at that time an infant daughter at her breast, and she took the foundling from her husband's arms, and became unto it as a mother, nursing it with her own child. But John told not his wife of the purse, nor the ring, nor the rich jewels.

The child had been in their keeping for several weeks, but no one appeared to claim him. "The bairn may hae been baptized," said John; "but it wad be after the fashion o' the sons o' Belial; but he is a brand plucked from the burning—he is my bairn noo, and I shall be unto him as a faither—I'll tak upon me the vows—and, as though he

were flesh o' my ain flesh, I will fulfil them." So the child was baptized; and, in consequence of his having been found on Philiphaugh, and, of the victory there gained, he was called Philip; and, as John had adopted him as his son, he bore also the name of Brydone. It is unnecessary for us to follow the foundling through his years of boyhood. John had two children—a son named Daniel, and Mary, who was nursed at her mother's breast with the orphan Philip. As the boy grew up, he called his protectors by the name of father and mother; but he knew they were not such, for John had shown him the spot upon the Haugh where he had found him wailing on the bosom of his dead mother. Frequently, too, when he quarrelled with his playfellows, they would call him the "Philiphaugh foundling," and "the cavalier's brat;" and on such occasions Mary was wont to take his part, and, weeping, say, "he was her brother." As he grew up, however, it grieved his protector to observe, that he manifested but little of the piety, and less of the sedateness of his own children. "What is born i' the bane, isna easily rooted out o' the flesh," said John; and in secret he prayed and wept that his adopted son might be brought to a knowledge of the truth. The days of the Commonwealth had come, and John and his son Daniel rejoiced in the triumphs of the Parliamentary armies, and the success of its fleets; but while they spoke, Philip would mutter between his teeth—"It is the triumph of murderers!" He believed that but for the ascendancy of the Commonwealth, he might have obtained some tidings of his family; and this led him to hate a cause which the ardent activity of his spirit might have tempted him to embrace.

Mary Brydone had always been dear to him; and, as he grew towards manhood, he gazed on her beautiful features with delight; but it was not the calm delight of a brother contemplating the fair face of a sister; for Philip's heart glowed as he gazed, and the blush gathered on his cheek. One summer evening, they were returning from the fields together, the sun was sinking in the west, the Ettrick murmured along by their side, and the plaintive voice of the wild-dove was heard from the copse-wood which covered the hills.

"Why are you so sad, brother Philip?" said Mary, 'would you hide anything from your own sister?"

"Do not call me *brother*, Mary," said he earnestly—"do not call me *brother!*"

"Who would call you brother, Philip, if I did not?" returned she affectionately.

"Let Daniel call me brother," said he, eagerly; "but not you—not you!"

She burst into tears. "When did I offend you, Philip?" she added, "that I may not call you brother?"

"Never, Mary!—never!" he exclaimed. "Call me Philip—*your* Philip!—anything but brother!" He took her hand within his—he pressed it to his bosom. "Mary," he added, "I have neither father, mother, brother, nor kindred—I am alone in the world—let there be something that I can call *mine*—something that will love me in return! Do you understand me, Mary?"

"You are cruel, Philip," said, she, sobbing as she spoke; "you know I love you—I have always loved you!"

"Yes, as you love Daniel—as you love your father; but not as"——

"You love Mr. Duncan," he would have said; but his heart upbraided him for the suspicion, and he was silent. It is here necessary to inform the reader that Mr. Duncan was a preacher of the Covenant, and John Brydone revered him much. He was much older than Mary, but his heart cleaved to her, and he had asked her father's consent to become his son-in-law. John, though a stern man, was not one who would force the inclination of his daughter; but Mr. Duncan was, as he expressed it, "one of the faithful in Israel," and his proposal was pleasing to him. Mary, however, regarded the preacher with awe, but not with affection.

Mary felt that she understood Philip—that she loved him, and not as a brother. She hid her face upon his shoulder, and her hand returned the pressure of his. They entered the house together, and her father perceived that his daughter's face was troubled. The manner of both was changed. He was a shrewd man as well as a stern man, and he also suspected the cause.

"Philip," said he calmly, "for twenty years hae I protected ye an' watched owre ye wi' a faither's care, an' I fear that,

in return for my care, ye hae brought sorrow into the bosom o' my family, an' instilled disobedience into the flesh o' my ain flesh. But, though ye hae cleaved—as it maun hae been inherent in your bluid—after the principles o' the sons o' this warld, yet, as I ne'er found ye guilty o' falsehood, an' as I believe ye incapable o' ane, tell me truly why is yer countenance, an' that o' Mary, changed—and why are ye baith troubled to look me straight in the face? Answer me—hae ye taught her to forget that she is yer sister?"

"Yes!" answered Philip; "and can it offend the man who saved me, who has watched over me, and sheltered me from infancy till now, that I should wish to be his son in more than in name?"

"It does offend me, Philip," said the Covenanter; "even unto death it offends me! I hae consented that my dochter shall gie her hand to a guid an' a godly man, who will look after her weelfare baith here and hereafter. And ye kenned this—she kenned it, and she didna refuse; but ye hae come like the son o' darkness, an' sawn tares amang the wheat."

"Father," said Philip, "if you will still allow me to call you by that name—foundling though I am—unknown as I am—in what am I worse than him to whom ye would sacrifice your daughter's happiness?"

"Sacrifice her happiness!" interrupted the old man; "hoo daur ye speak o' happiness, wha kens nae meanin' for the word but the vain pleasures o' this sinfu' warld! Think ye that, as a faither, an' as ane that has my offspring to answer for, that I daur sacrifice the eternal happiness o' my bairn, for the gratification o' a temporary feelin' which ye encourage the day and may extinguish the morn. Na, sir, they wha wad ken what true happiness is, maun first learn to crucify human passions. Mary," added he, sternly, turning to his daughter, "repeat the fifth commandment."

She had been weeping before, and she now wept aloud.

"Repeat it," replied her father yet more sternly.

"Honour thy father and thy mother," added she, sobbing as she spoke.

"See, then, bairn," rejoined her father, "that ye remember that commandment on yer heart, as weel as on yer

tongue. Remember, too, that o' a' the commands, it's the only ane to which a promise is attached; and, noo, mark what I say, an', as ye wadna disobey me, see, at yer peril, that ye ne'er permit this young man to speak to ye again, save only as a brither."

"Sir," said Philip, "we have grown up together like twin tendrils on the same vine, and can ye wonder that our hearts have become entwined round each other, or that they can tear asunder because ye command it? Or, could I look on the face of an angel"——

"Out on ye, blasphemer!" interrupted the Covenanter—"wad ye apply siccan epithets to a bairn o' mine? Once for all, hear me, Philip; there are but twa ways o't, and ye can tak yer choice. It's the first time I hae spoken to ye roughly, but it isna the first time my spirit has mourned owre ye. I hae tried to lead ye in the right path; ye hae had baith precept and example afore ye; but the leaven o' this warld—the leaven o' the persecutors o' the Kirk and the Covenant—was in yer very bluid; an' I believe, if opportunity had offered, ye wad hae drawn yer sword in the unholy cause. A' that I could say, an' a' that I could do, religion has ne'er had ony place in yer heart; but ye hae yearned aboot yer faither, and ye hae mourned aboot yer mother—an' that was natural aneugh—but, oh! ye hae also desired to cling to the cauld formality o' Episcopacy, as they nae doot did; an' should ye e'er discover that yer parents hae been Papists, I believe that ye wad become ane too! An' often, when the conversation turned upon the apostate Montrose, or the gallant Lesly, I hae seen ye manifest the spirit an' the very look o' a persecutor. Were I to gie up my dochter to such a man, I should be worse than the heathen wha sacrifice their offspring to the abomination o' idols. Noo, Philip, as I hae tauld ye, there are but twa ways o't. Either this very hour gie me yer solemn promise that ye will think o' Mary as to be yer wife nae mair, or, wi' the risin' o' to-morrow's sun, leave this house for ever!"

"Sir," said Philip, bitterly, "your last command I can obey, though it would be with a sad heart—though it would be in despair!—your first I cannot—I will not!"

"You must—you *shall!*" replied the Covenanter.

"Never!" answered Philip.

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"Then," replied the old man, "leave the roof that has sheltered ye frae yer cradle!"

"I will!" said Philip, and the tears ran down his cheeks. He walked towards Mary, and, with a faltering voice, said—"Farewell, Mary!—Farewell! I did not expect this; but do not forget me—do not give your hand to another—and we shall meet again!"

"You shall not," interrupted the inexorable old man.

Mary implored her father, for her sake, and for the sake of her departed mother, who had loved Philip as her own son, that he would not drive him from the house, and Daniel, too entreated; but their supplications were vain.

"Farewell, then," said Philip; "and, though I depart in misery, let it not be with thy curse, but let the blessing of him who has been to me a father until now, go with me."

"The blessin' o' Heaven be wi' ye and around ye, Philip!" groaned the Covenanter, struggling to conceal a tear; "but, if ye will follow the dictates o' yer rebellious heart and leave us, tak' wi' ye yer property."

"My property!" repeated Philip.

"Yer property," returned the old man. "Twenty years has it lain in that drawer, an' during that time eyes hae not seen it, nor fingers touched it. It will assist ye noo; an', when ye enter the warld, may throw some light upon yer parentage."

He went to a small drawer, and, unlocking it, he took out the jewels, the bracelet, the ring, and the purse of gold, and, placing them in Philip's hand, exclaimed—"Fareweel!—fareweel!—but it maun be!" and he turned away his head.

"O Mary!" cried Philip, "keep—keep this in remembrance of me," as he attempted to place the ring in her hand.

"Awa, sir!" exclaimed the old man, vehemently, "wad ye bribe my bairn into disobèdience, by the ornaments o' folly an' iniquity! Awa, ye son o' Belial, an' provoke me not to wrath."

Philip groaned, he dashed his hand upon his brow, and rushed from the house. Mary wept long and bitterly, and Daniel walked to and fro across the room, mourning for one whom he loved as a brother. The old man went out into the fields to conceal the agony of his spirit; and when he had wandered for a while, he communed with himself, saying, "I hae dune foolishly, an' an ungodly action hae I performed this nicht; I hae driven oot a young man upon a wicked

warld, wi' a' his sins an' his follies on his head; an', evil come upon him, or he plunge into the paths o' wickedness, his bluid and his guilt will be laid at my hands! Puir Philip," he added,; "after a' he had a kind heart!" And the stern old man drew the sleeve of his coat across his eyes. In this frame of mind he returned to the house. "Has Philip not come back?" said he, as he entered. His son shook his head sorrowfully, and Mary sobbed more bitterly.

"Rin ye awa doun to Melrose, Daniel," said he, "an' I'll awa up to Selkirk, an' inquire for him, an' bring him back. Yer faither has allowed passion to get the better o' him, an' to overcome baith the man an' the Christian."

"Run, Daniel, run!" cried Mary, eagerly. And the old man and his son went out in search of him.

Their inquiries were fruitless. Days, weeks, and months rolled on, but nothing more was heard of poor Philip. Mary refused to be comforted; and the exhortations, the kindness, and the tenderness shown towards her by the Rev. Mr. Duncan, if not hateful, were disagreeable. Dark thoughts, too, had taken possession of her father's mind, and he frequently sank into melancholy; for the thought haunted him that his adopted son, on being driven from his house, had laid violent hands upon his own life; and this idea embittered every day of his existence.

More than ten years had passed since Philip had left the house of John Brydone. The Commonwealth was at an end, and the second Charles had been recalled; but exile had not taught him wisdom, nor the fate of his father, discretion. He madly attempted to be the lord and ruler of the people's conscience, as well as King of Britain. He was a libertine with some virtues—a bigot without religion. In the pride, or rather folly of his heart, he attempted to force Prelacy upon the people of Scotland; and he let his blood-hounds loose, to hunt the followers of the Covenant from hill to hill, to murder them on their own hearths, and, with the blood of his victims, to blot out the word *conscience* from the vocabulary of Scotchmen. The Covenanters sought their God in the desert and on the mountains which He had reared; they worshipped Him in the temples which His own hands had framed; and there the persecutor sought them, the destroyer found them, and the sword of the tyrant was bathed in the

blood of the worshipper. Even the family altar was profaned; and, to raise the voice of prayer and praise in the cottage to the King of kings, was held to be as treason against him who professed to represent Him on earth. At this period, too, Graham of Claverhouse—whom some have painted as an angel, but whose actions were worthy of a fiend—at the head of his troopers, who were called by the profane, *the ruling elders of the kirk*, was carrying death and cold-blooded cruelty throughout the land.

Now it was on a winter night in the year 1677, a party of troopers were passing near the house of old John Brydone, and he was known to them not only as being one who was a defender of the Covenant, but also as one who harboured the preachers, and whose house was regarded as a conventicle.

"Let us rouse the old psalm-singing heretic who lives here, from his knees," said one of the troopers.

"Ay, let us stir him up," said the sergeant, who had the command of the party; "he is an old offender, and I don't see we can make a better night's work than drag him along, bag and baggage, to the Captain. I have heard as how it was he that betrayed our commander's kinsman, the gallant Montrose."

"Hark!—hark!—softly! softly!" said another, "let us dismount—hear how the nasal drawl of the conventicle moans through the air! My horse pricks his ears at the sound already. We shall catch them in the act."

Eight of the party dismounted, and, having given their horses in charge of four of their comrades, who remained behind, walked on tip-toe to the door of the cottage. They heard the words given, and sung—

"When cruel men against us rose
To make of us their prey."

"Why, they are singing treason," said one of the troopers. "What more do we need?"

The sergeant placed his forefinger on his lips, and, for about ten minutes they continued to listen. The song of praise ceased, and a person thereafter commenced to read a chapter. They heard him also expound to his hearers as he read.

"It is enough!" said the sergeant; and, placing their shoulders against the door, it was burst open. "You are our prisoner!" exclaimed the troopers, each man grasping a sword in his right hand, and a pistol in the left.

"It is the will of Heaven!" said the Rev. Mr. Duncan; for it was him who had been reading and expounding the Scriptures; "but, if ye stretch forth your hands against a hair o' our heads, HE, without whom a sparrow cannot fall to the ground, shall remember it against ye at the great day o' reckoning, when the trooper shall be stripped of his armour, and his right hand shall be a witness against him!"

The soldiers burst into a laugh of derision. "No more of your homily, revered oracle," said the sergeant; "I have an excellent recipe for short sermons here; utter another word, and you shall have it!" The troopers laughed again, and the sergeant, as he spoke, held his pistol in the face of the preacher.

Besides the clergyman there were in the room old John Brydone, his son Daniel, and Mary.

"Well, old greybeard," said the sergeant, addressing John, "you have been reported as a dangerous and disaffected Presbyterian knave, as we find you to be; you are also accused of being a harbourer and an accomplice of the preachers of sedition; and, lo! we have found that also your house is used as a conventicle. We have caught you in the act, and we shall take every soul of you as evidence against yourselves. So come along, old boy—I should only be doing my duty by blowing your brains against the wall; but that is a ceremony which our commander may wish to see performed in his own presence!"

"Sir," said John, "I neither fear ye nor your armed men. Tak me to the bluidy Claverhouse, if ye will, and at the day o' judgment it shall be said—'*Let the murderers o' John Brydone stand forth!*'"

"Let us despatch them at once," said one of the troopers.

"Nay," said the sergeant; "bind them together, and drive them before us to the Captain: I don't know but he may wish to *do justice* to them with his own hand."

"The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel," groaned Mr. Duncan.

Mary wrung her hands—"Oh, spare my father!" she cried.

"Wheesht, Mary!" said the old man; "as soon wad a camel pass through the eye o' a needle, as ye wad find compassion in the hands o' these men!"

"Bind the girl and the preacher together," said the sergeant.

"Nay, by your leave, sergeant," interrupted one of the troopers, "I wouldn't be the man to lift a hand against a pretty girl like that, if you would give me a regiment for it."

"Ay, ay, Macdonald," replied the sergeant—"this comes of your serving under that canting fellow, Lieutenant Mowbray—he has no love for the service; and confound me if I don't believe he is half a Roundhead in his heart. Tie the hands of the girl, I command you."

"I will not!" returned Macdonald; "and hang me if any one else shall!"—And, with his sword in his hand, he placed himself between Mary and his comrades.

"If you do not bind her hands, I shall cause others to bind yours," said the sergeant.

"They may try that who dare!" returned the soldier, who was the most powerful man of the party; "but what I've said I'll stand to."

"You shall answer for this to-morrow," said the sergeant, sullenly, who feared to provoke a quarrel with the trooper.

"I will answer it," replied the other.

John Brydone, his son Daniel, and the Rev. Mr. Duncan, were bound together with strong cords, and driven from the house. They were fastened, also, to the horses of the troopers; and, as they were dragged along, the cries and the lamentations of Mary followed them; and the troopers laughed at her wailing, or answered her cries with mockery, till the sound of her grief became inaudible in the distance, when again they imitated her cries, to harrow up the feelings of her father.

Claverhouse, and a party of his troops, were then in the neighbourhood of Traquair; and before that man, who knew not what mercy was, John Brydone, and his son, and the preacher, were brought. It was on the afternoon of the day following that on which they had been made prisoners, that Claverhouse ordered them to be brought forth. He was sitting, with wine before him, in the midst of his officers; and amongst them was Lieutenant Mowbray, whose name was alluded to by the sergeant.

"Well, knaves!" began Claverhouse, "ye have been singing, praying, preaching, and holding conventicles. Do ye know how Graham of Claverhouse rewards such rebels?"

As the prisoners entered, Lieutenant Mowbray turned away his head, and placed his hand upon his brow.

"Sir," said John, addressing Claverhouse, "I'm neither knave nor rebel—I hae lifted up my voice to the God o' my faithers, according to my conscience; and, unworthy as I am o' the least o' His benefits, for threescore years and ten He has been my shepherd and deliverer, and, if it be good in His sight, He will deliver me now. My trust is in Him, and I fear neither the frown nor the sword o' the persecutor."

"Have done, grey-headed babbler!" cried Claverhouse.

Lieutenant Mowbray, who still sat with his face from the prisoners, raised his handkerchief to his eyes.

"Captain," said Mr. Duncan, "there's a day coming when ye shall stand before the great Judge, as we now stand before you; and when the remembrance o' this day, and the blood o' the righteous which ye hae shed, shall be written with letters o' fire on yer ain conscience, and recorded against ye; and ye shall call upon the rocks and mountains to cover ye—"

"Silence!" exclaimed Claverhouse. "Away with them!" he added, waving his hand to his troopers—"shoot them before sunrise!"

Shortly after the prisoners had been conveyed from the presence of Claverhouse, Lieutenant Mowbray withdrew; and having sent for the soldier who had interfered on behalf of Mary—"Macdonald," he began—"You were present yesterday when the prisoners, who are to die to-morrow, were taken. Where did you find them?"

"In the old man's house," replied the soldier; and he related all that he had seen, and how he had interfered to save the daughter. The heart of the officer was touched, and he walked across the room, as one whose spirit was troubled. "You did well, Macdonald!" said he, at length—"You did well!" He was again silent, and again he added—"And you found the preacher in the old man's house—*you found* HIM *there!*" There was an anxious wildness in the tone of the lieutenant.

"We found him there," replied the soldier.

The officer was again silent—again he thoughtfully paced

across the floor of his apartment. At length, turning to the soldier, he added—"I can trust you, Macdonald. When night has set in, take your horse and ride to the house of the elder prisoner, and tell his daughter—the maiden whom you saved—to have horses in readiness for her father, her brother, and—and her—her *husband!*" said the lieutenant, faltering as he spoke; and when he had pronounced the word *husband*, he again paused, as though his heart was full. The soldier was retiring—"Stay," added the officer, "tell her, her father, her brother, and—the preacher, shall not die; before day-break she shall see them again; and give her this ring as a token that ye speak truly."

He took a ring from his finger, and gave it into the hands of the soldier.

It was drawing towards midnight. The troops of Claverhouse were quartered around the country, and his three prisoners, still bound to each other, were confined in a small farm-house, from which the inhabitants had been expelled. They could hear the heavy and measured tread of the sentinel pacing backward and forward in front of the house; the sound of his footsteps seemed to measure out the moments between them and eternity. After they had sung a psalm and prayed together—"I am auld," said John Brydone, "and I fear not to die, but rather glory to lay down my life for the great cause—but, oh, Daniel! my heart yearns that yer bluid also should be shed—had they only spared ye, to hae been a protector to oor puir Mary!—or had I no driven Philip frae the house"——

"Mention not the name of the cast-away," said the minister.

"Dinna mourn, faither," answered Daniel, "an arm mair powerful than that of man will be her supporter and protector."

"Amen," responded Mr. Duncan. "She has aye been cauld to me, and has turned the ear o' the deaf adder to the voice o' my affection; but even noo, when my thochts should be elsewhere, the thocht o' her burns in my heart like a coal o' my fire."

While they yet spoke, a soldier, wrapped up in a cloak, approached the sentinel, and said—

"It is a cold night, brother."

"Piercing," replied the other, striking his feet upon the ground.

"You are welcome to a mouthful of my spirit-warmer," added the first, taking a bottle from beneath his cloak.

"Thank ye!" rejoined the sentinel: "but I don't know your voice. You don't belong to our corps, I think."

"No," answered the other; "but it matters not for that—brother soldiers should give and take."

The sentinel took the bottle and raised it to his lips; he drank, and swore the liquor was excellent.

"Drink again," said the other; "you are welcome; it is as good as a double cloak around you." And the sentinel drank again.

"Good night, comrade," said the trooper. "Good night," replied the sentinel; and the stranger passed on.

Within half an hour, the same soldier, still muffled up in his cloak, returned. The sentinel had fallen against the door of the house, and was fast asleep. The stranger proceeded to the window—he raised it—he entered. "Fear nothing," he whispered to the prisoners, who were bound to staples that had been driven into the opposite wall of the room. He cut the cords with which their hands and their feet were fastened.

"Heaven reward ye for the mercy o' yer heart, and the courage o' this deed," said John.

"Say nothing," whispered their deliverer, "but follow me."

Each man crept from the window, and the stranger again closed it behind them. "Follow me, and speak not," whispered he again; and, walking at his utmost speed, he conducted them for several miles across the hills; but still he spoke not. Old John marvelled at the manner of their deliverer; and he marvelled yet more when he led them to Philiphaugh, and to the very spot where, more than thirty years before, he had found the child on the bosom of its dead mother; and there the stranger stood still, and, turning round to those he had delivered—"Here we part," said he; "hasten to your own house, but tarry not. You will find horses in readiness, and flee into Westmoreland; inquire there for the person to whom this letter is addressed; he will protect you." And he put a sealed letter into the hands of the old man, and, at the same time he placed a

purse in the hands of Daniel, saying, "This will bear your expenses by the way—Farewell!—farewell!" They would have detained him, but he burst away, again exclaiming, as he ran—"Farewell!"

"This is a marvellous deliverance," said John; it is a mystery, an' for him to leave us on this spot—on *this very spot*—where puir Philip"—— And here the heart of the old man failed him.

We need not describe the rage of Claverhouse, when he found, on the following day, that the prisoners had escaped; and how he examined and threatened the sentinels with death, and cast suspicious glances upon Lieutenant Mowbray; but he feared to accuse him, or quarrel with him openly.

As John, with the preacher and his son, approached the house, Mary heard their footsteps, and rushed out to meet them, and fell weeping upon her father's neck. "My bairn!" cried the old man; "we are restored to ye as from the dead! Providence has dealt wi' us in mercy an' in mystery."

His four farm horses were in readiness for their flight; and Mary told him how the same soldier who had saved her from sharing their fate, had come to their house at midnight, and assured her that they should not die, and to prepare for their flight. "And," added she, "in token that he who had sent him would keep his promise towards you, he gave me this ring, requesting me to wear it for your deliverer's sake."

"It is Philip's ring!" cried the old man, striking his hand before his eyes, "it is Philip's ring!"

"*My* Philip's!" exclaimed Mary; "oh, then, he lives! he lives!"

The preacher leaned his brow against the walls of the cottage and groaned.

"It is still a mystery," said the old man, yet pressing his hands before his eyes in agony; "but it is—it maun be him. It was Philip that saved us—that conducted us to the very spot where I found him! But, oh," he added, "I wud rather I had died, than lived to ken that he has drawn his sword in the ranks o' the oppressor, and to murder the followers after the truth."

"Oh, dinna think that o' him, father!" exclaimed Mary;

"Philip wudna—he couldna draw his sword but to defend the helpless!"

Knowing that they had been pursued and sought after, they hastened their flight to England, to seek the refuge to which their deliverer had directed them. But as they drew near to the Borders, the Rev. Mr. Duncan suddenly exclaimed: "Now, here we must part—part for ever! It is not meet that I should follow ye farther. When the sheep are pursued by the wolves, the shepherd should not flee from them. Farewell, dear friends—and, oh! farewell to you, Mary! Had it been sinful to hae loved you, I would hae been a guilty man this day—for, oh! beyond a' that is under the sun, ye hae been dear to my heart, and your remembrance has mingled wi' my very devotions. But I maun root it up, though in so doing, I tear my very heartstrings. Fareweel! fareweel! Peace be wi' you; and may ye a' be happier than will ever more fall to the earthly lot o' Andrew Duncan!"

The tears fell upon Mary's cheeks; for, though she could not love, she respected the preacher, and she esteemed him for his worth. Her father and brother entreated him to accompany them. "No, no!" he answered; "I see how this flight will end. Go—there is happiness in store for you; but my portion is with the dispersed and the persecuted." And he turned and left them.

Lieutenant Mowbray was disgusted with the cold-blooded butchery of the service in which he was engaged; and, a few days after the escape of John Brydone and his son, he threw up his commission and proceeded to Dumfriesshire. It was a Sabbath evening, and near nightfall; he had wandered into the fields alone, for his spirit was heavy. Sounds of rude laughter broke upon his ear; and, mingled with the sound of laughter, was a voice as if in earnest prayer. He hurried to a small wood from whence the sounds proceeded, and there he beheld four troopers, with their pistols in their hands, and before them was a man, who appeared to be a preacher, bound to a tree.

"Come, old Psalmody!" cried one of the troopers, raising his pistol, and addressing their intended victim, who was engaged in prayer; "make ready—we have other jobs on hand—and we gave you time to speak a prayer, but not to preach."

Mowbray rushed forward. He sprang between the troopers and their victim. "Hold! ye murderers, hold!" he exclaimed. "Is it thus that ye disgrace the name of soldiers by washing your hands in the blood of the innocent?"

They knew Mowbray, and they muttered, "You are no officer of ours now; he is our prisoner, and our orders are to shoot every conventicle knave who falls into our hands."

"Shame on him who would give such orders," said Mowbray; "and shame on those who would execute them. There," he added, "there is money; I will ransom him."

With an imprecation, they took the money that was offered them, and left their prisoner to Mowbray. He approached the tree where they had bound him—he started back—it was the Rev. Andrew Duncan.

"Rash man!" exclaimed Mowbray, as he again stepped forward to unloose the cords that bound him. "Why have ye again cast yourself into the hands of the men who seek your blood? Do ye hold your life so cheap, that, in one week, ye would risk to sell it twice? Why did not ye, with your father, your brother, and your *wife*, flee into England, where protection was promised?"

"My father!—my brother!—my wife!—mine!—mine!" repeated the preacher wildly. "There are no such names for my tongue to utter!—none!—none to drop their love as morning dew upon the solitary soul o' Andrew Duncan!"

"Are they murdered?" exclaimed Mowbray, suddenly, in a voice of agony.

"Murdered!" said the preacher, with increased bewilderment. "What do ye mean?—or wha do ye mean?"

"Tell me," cried Mowbray, eagerly, "are not you the husband of Mary Brydone?"

"Me!—Me!" cried the preacher. "No, no!—I loved her as the laverock loves the blue lift in spring, and her shadow cam between me and my ain soul; but she wadna hearken unto my voice; she is nae wife o' mine."

"Thank Heaven!" exclaimed Mowbray; and he clasped his hands together.

It is necessary, however, that we now accompany John Brydone and his family in their flight into Westmoreland. The letter which their deliverer had put into their hands

was addressed to a Sir Frederic Mowbray; and, when they arrived at the house of the old knight, the heart of the aged Covenanter almost failed him for a moment; for it was a proud-looking mansion, and those whom he saw around wore the dress of the Cavaliers.

"Who are ye?" inquired the servant who admitted them to the house.

"Deliver this letter into the hands of your master," said the Covenanter; "our business is with him."

"It is the handwriting of Master Edward," said the servant, as he took the letter into his hand; and, having conducted them to a room, he delivered it to Sir Frederic.

In a few minutes the old knight hurried into the room where the Covenanter, and his son and his daughter stood. "Welcome, thrice welcome," he cried, grasping the hand of the old man; "here you shall find a resting-place and a home, with no one to make you afraid."

He ordered wine and food to be placed before them, and he sat down with them.

Now John marvelled at the kindness of his host, and his heart burned within him—and, in the midst of all, he thought of the long lost Philip, and how he had driven him from his house—and his cheek glowed and his heart throbbed with anxiety. His son marvelled also, and Mary's bosom swelled with strange thoughts—tears gathered in her eyes, and she raised the ring that had been the token of her father's deliverance to her lips.

"Oh, sir," said the Covenanter, "pardon the freedom o' a plain blunt man, and o' ane whose bosom is burning wi' anxiety;—but there is a mystery, there is *something* attending my deliverance, and the letter, and your kindness, that I canna see through—and I hope, and I fear—and I canna—I *daurna* comprehend how it is!—but, as it were, the past—the lang bygane past, and the present, appear to hae met thegither! It is makin' my head dizzy wi' wonder, for there seems in a' this a something that concerns you, and that concerns me, and *one* that I mayna name."

"Your perplexity," said Sir Frederic, "may be best relieved, by stating to you, in a few words, one or two circumstances of my history. Having, from family affliction, left this country, until within these four years. I held a

commission in the army of the Prince of Orange. I was present at the battle of Seneff; it was my last engagement; and in the regiment which I commanded, there was a young Scottish Volunteer, to whose bravery, during the battle, I owed my life. In admiration and gratitude for his conduct, I sent for him after the victory, to present him to the prince. He came. I questioned him respecting his birth and his family. He was silent—he burst into tears. I urged him to speak. He said, of his real name he knew nothing—of his family he knew nothing—all that he knew, was, that he had been the adopted son of a good and a Christian man, who had found him on Philiphaugh, on the lifeless bosom of his mother!"

"Merciful Heaven! my puir, injured Philip!" exclaimed the aged Covenanter, wringing his hands.

"My brother!" cried Daniel, eagerly. Mary wept.

"Oh, sir!" continued Sir Frederic, "words cannot paint my feelings as he spoke! I had been at the battle of Philiphaugh! and, not dreaming that a conflict was at hand, my beloved wife, with her infant boy, my little Edward, had joined me but the day before. At the first noise of Lesly's onset, I rushed from our tent—I left my loved ones there!—our army was stricken with confusion—I never beheld them again! I grasped the hand of the youth—I gazed in his face as though my soul would have leaped from my eyelids. 'Do not deceive me!' I cried; and he drew from his bosom the ring and the bracelets of my Elizabeth!"

Here the old knight paused and wept, and the tears ran down the cheeks of John Brydone, and the cheeks of his children.

They had not been many days in Westmoreland, and they were seated around the hospitable hearth of the good knight in peace, when two horsemen arrived at the door.

"It is our friend, Mr. Duncan, and a stranger!" said the Covenanter, as he beheld them from the window.

"They are welcome—for your sake, they are welcome," said Sir Frederic; and while he yet spoke, the strangers entered. "My son, my son!" he continued, and hurried forward to meet him.

"Say also your *daughter!*" said Edward Mowbray, as he approached towards Mary, and pressed her to his breast.

"Philip!—my own Philip!" exclaimed Mary, and speech failed her.

"My brother!" said Daniel. "He was dead and is alive again—he was lost and is found," exclaimed John. "O Philip, man! do ye forgi'e me?"

The adopted son pressed the hand of his foster-father.

"Yes, he forgives you!" exclaimed Mr. Duncan; "and he has forgiven me. When we were in prison and in bonds waiting for death, he risked his life to deliver us, and he did deliver us; and a second time he has rescued me from the sword of the destroyer, and from the power of the men who thirst for my blood. He is no enemy o' the Covenant —he is the defender o' the persecuted; and the blessing o' Andrew Duncan is all he can bequeath for a life twice saved, upon his deliverer, and Mary Brydone."

Need we say that Mary bestowed her hand upon Edward Mowbray; but in the fondness of her heart she still called him "her Philip!"

THE DOOM OF SOULIS.

"They rolled him up in a sheet of lead,
A sheet of lead for a funeral pall;
They plunged him in the caldron red,
And melted him—lead, and bones, and all."—*Leyden.*

A GAZETTEER would inform you that Denholm is a village beautifully situated near the banks of the Teviot, about midway between Jedburgh and Hawick, and in the parish of Cavers; and, perhaps, if of modern date, it would add, it has the honour of being the birth-place of Dr. Leyden. However, it was some what early on a summer morning, a few years ago, that a young man, a stranger, with a fishing-rod in his hand, and a creel fastened to his shoulders, entered the village. He stood in the midst of it, and, turning round—"This, then," said he, "is the birthplace of Leyden—the son of genius—the martyr of study—the friend of Scott!"

Few of the villagers were astir; and at the first he met—who carried a spade over his shoulder, and appeared to be a ditcher—he inquired if he could show him the house in which the bard and scholar was born.

"Ou, ay, sir," said the man, "I wat can I—I'll show ye that instantly, and proud to show you it too."

"That is good," thought the stranger; "the prophet is dead, but he yet speaketh—he hath honour in his own country."

The ditcher conducted him across the green, and past the end of a house, which was described as being the school-house, and was newly built, and led him towards an humble building, the height of which was but a single story, and which was found occupied by a millwright as a workshop. Yet, again, the stranger rejoiced to find that the occupier venerated his

premises for the poet's sake, and that he honoured the genius of him who was born in their precincts.

"Dash it!"[1] said the stranger, quoting the habitual phrase of poor Leyden, "I shall fish none to-day." And I wonder not at his having so said; for it is not every day that we can stand beneath the thatch-clad roof—or any other roof—where was born one whose name time will bear written in undying characters on its wings, until those wings droop in the darkness of eternity.

The stranger proceeded up the Teviot, oftentimes thinking of Leyden, of all that he had written, and occasionally repeating passages aloud. He almost forgot that he had a rod in his hand—his eyes did anything but follow the fly, and, I need hardly say, his success was not great.

About mid-day, he sat down on the green bank in solitariness, to enjoy a sandwich, and he also placed by his side a small flask containing spirits, which almost every angler, who can afford it, carries with him. But he had not sat long, when a venerable-looking old man saluted him with—

"Here's a bonny day, sir." The old man stood as he spoke. There was something prepossessing in his appearance. He had a weather-beaten face, with thin white hair; blue eyes that had lost somewhat of their former lustre; his shoulders were rather bent; and he seemed a man who was certainly neither rich nor affluent, but who was at ease with the world, and the world was at ease with him.

They entered into conversation, and they sat down together. The old man appeared exactly one of those characters whom you will occasionally find, fraught with the traditions of the Borders, and still tainted with, and half-believing in, their ancient superstitions. I wish not to infer that superstition was carried to a greater height of absurdity on the Borders than in other parts of England and Scotland, nor even that the inhabitants of the north were as remarkable in early days for their superstitions, as they now are for their intelligence; for every nation had its superstitions, and I am persuaded that most of them might be traced to a common origin. Yet, though the same in origin, they change their likeness with the character of a nation or district. People unconsciously made

[1] This was a common expression of Leyden's, and, perhaps, was in some degree expressive of his headlong and determined character.

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their superstitions to suit themselves, though their imaginary effects still terrified them. There was, therefore, a something characteristic in the fables of our forefathers, which fables they believed as facts. The cunning deceived the ignorant—the ignorant were willing to deceive themselves; and what we now laugh at as the clever trick of a *hocus-pocus* man, was, scarce more than a century ago, received as a miracle—as a thing performed by the hand of the "prince of the powers of the air." Religion without knowledge, and still swaddled in darkness, fostered the idle fear: yea, there are few superstitions, though prostituted by wickedness, that did not owe their existence to some glimmering idea of religion. They had not seen the lamp which lightens the soul, and leadeth it to knowledge; but, having perceived its far-off reflection, plunged into the quagmire of error—and hence proceeded superstition. But I digress into a discant on the superstitions of our fathers, nor should I have done so, but that it is impossible to write a Border Tale of the olden time without bringing them forward; and, when I do so, it is not with the intention of instilling into the minds of my readers the old idea of sorcery, witchcraft, and visible spirits, but of showing what was the belief and conduct of our forefathers. Therefore, without further comment, I shall cut short these remarks, and simply observe, that the thoughts of the young stranger still running upon Leyden, he turned to the elder, after they had sat together for some time, and said—"Did you know Dr. Leyden, sir?"

"Ken him!" said the old man; "fifty years ago, I've wrought day's-work beside his father for months together!"

They continued their conversation for some time, and the younger inquired of the elder, if he were acquainted with Leyden's ballad of "Lord Soulis?"

"Why, I hae heard a verse or twa o' the ballant, sir," said the old man, "but I'm sure everybody kens the story. However, if ye're no perfectly acquaint wi' it, I'm sure I'm willing to let ye hear it wi' great pleasure; and a remarkable story it is—and just as true, sir, ye may tak my word on't, as that I'm raising this bottle to my lips."

So saying, the old man raised the flask to his mouth, and after a regular fisher's draught, added—

"Weel, sir, I'll let ye hear the story about Lord Soulis—

You have, no doubt, heard of Hermitage Castle, which stands upon the river of that name, at no great distance from Hawick. In the days of the great and good King Robert the Bruce, that castle was inhabited by Lord Soulis.[1] He was a man whose very name spread terror far and wide; for he was a tyrant and a sorcerer. He had a giant's strength, an evil eye,[2] and a demon's heart; and he kept his *familiar*[3] locked in a chest. Peer and peasant became pale at the name of Lord Soulis. His hand smote down the strong, his eye blasted the healthy. He oppressed the poor, and he robbed the rich. He ruled over his vassals with a rod of iron. From the banks of the Tweed, the Teviot, and the Jed, with their tributaries, to beyond the Lothians, an incessant cry was raised against him to Heaven and to the king. But his life was protected by a charm, and mortal weapons could not prevail against him. (The seriousness with which the narrator said this, showed that he gave full credit to the tradition, and believed in Lord Soulis as a sorcerer.)

"He was a man of great stature, and his person was exceeding powerful. He had also royal blood in his veins, and laid claim to the crown of Scotland in opposition to the Bruce. But two things troubled him; and the one was, to place the crown of Scotland on his head—the other, to possess the hand of a fair and rich maiden, named Marion, who was about to wed with Walter, the young heir of Branxholm, the stoutest and the boldest youth on all the wide Borders. Soulis was a man who was not only of a cruel heart, but it was filled with forbidden thoughts; and, to accomplish his purposes, he went down into the dungeon of his castle, in the dead of night, that no man might see him perform the 'deed without a name.' He carried a small lamp in his hand, which threw around a lurid light, like a glow-worm in a sepulchre; and, as he went, he locked the doors behind him. He carried a cat in his arms. Behind him a dog followed timidly, and be-

[1] He was also proprietor of Eccles in Berwickshire, and, according to history, was seized in the town of Berwick—but tradition sayeth otherwise.

[2] There is, perhaps, no superstition more widely diffused than the belief in the fascination of an evil eye or a malignant glance; and I am sorry to say, the absurdity has still its believers.

[3] Each sorcerer was supposed to have his familiar spirit, that accompanied him; but Soulis was said to keep his locked in a chest.

fore him, into the dungeon, he drove a young bull that had 'never nipped the grass.' He entered the deep and the gloomy vault, and, with a loud voice, he exclaimed—

"'Spirit of darkness!—I come!'

"He placed the feeble lamp upon the ground in the middle of the vault; and, with a pick-axe, which he had previously prepared, he dug a pit and buried the cat alive; and, as the poor, suffocating creature mewed, he exclaimed the louder—

"'Spirit of darkness, come!'

"He then leaped upon the grave of the living animal, and seizing the dog by the neck, he dashed it violently against the wall, towards the left corner where he stood, and, unable to rise, it lay howling long and piteously on the floor. Then did he plunge his knife into the throat of the young bull, and, while its bleatings, mingled with the howling of the dying dog, amidst what might be called the blue darkness of the vault, he received the blood in the palms of his hands, and he stalked around the dungeon, sprinkling it in circles, and crying with a loud voice—'Spirit of darkness, hear me!'

"Again he digged a pit, and seizing the dying animal, he hurled it into the grave, feet upwards;[1] again he groaned, and while the sweat stood on his brow—'Come, spirit, come!'

"He took a horse-shoe, which had lain in the vault for years, and which was called, in the family, the *spirit's shoe*, and he nailed it against the door, so that it hung obliquely;[2] and, as he gave the last blow to the nail, again he cried—

"'Spirit, I obey thee!—come!'

"Afterwards, he took his place in the middle of the floor, and nine times he scattered around him a handful of salt, at each time exclaiming—

[1] These are the recorded practices which sorcerers resorted to when they wished to have a *glimpse* of *invisible* spirits.

[2] In the account of the trial of Elizabeth Bathgate, wife of Alexander Pae, maltman in Eyemouth, one of the accusations in the indictment against her was, that she had "ane horse-schoe in ane darnet and secriet pairt of your dur, keepit by you thairopoun, as ane devilish meanis and instructions from the devil." But the superstitions of the Borders, which it is necessary to illustrate in these Tales, as exemplifying the character of our forefathers, will be more particularly dwelt upon, and their absurdity unmasked, in Tales which will shortly appear, entitled—"Betty Bathgate, the Witch of Eyemouth;" "Peggy Stoddart, the Witch of Edlingham;" and "The Laidley Worm of Spindlestone Heugh."

"'Spirit, arise!'

"Then did he strike thrice nine times with his hand upon a chest which stood in the middle of the floor, and by its foot was the pale lamp, and at each blow he cried—

"'Arise, spirit! arise!'

"Therefore, when he had done these things, and cried twenty and seven times, the lid of the chest began to move, and a fearful figure, with a red cap[1] upon its head, and which resembled nothing in heaven above, or on earth below, rose, and, with a hollow voice,[2] inquired—

"'What want ye, Soulis?'

"'Power, spirit!—power!' he cried, 'that mine eyes may have their desire, and that every weapon formed by man may fall skaithless on my body, as the spent light of a waning moon!'

"'Thy wish is granted, mortal!' groaned the fiend. 'To-morrow eve, young Branxholm's bride shall sit within thy bower, and his sword return bent from thy bosom, as though he had dashed it against a rock. Farewell! invoke me not again for seven years, nor open the door of the vault, but then knock thrice upon the chest and I will answer thee. Away! follow thy course of sin and prosper—*but beware of a coming wood.*'

"With a loud and sudden noise, the lid of the massy chest fell, and the spirit disappeared, and from the floor of the vault issued a deep sound, like the echoing of thunder. Soulis took up the flickering lamp, and leaving the dying dog still howling in the corner whence he had driven it, he locked the iron door, and placed the huge key in his bosom.'

"In the morning, his vassals came to him, and they prayed him on their bended knees, that he would lessen the weight of their hard bondage; but he laughed at their prayers and answered them with stripes. He oppressed the widow, and persecuted the fatherless; he defied the powerful, and trampled on the weak. His name spread terror wheresoever it was

[1] Red-cap is a name given to spirits supposed to haunt castles.

[2] In the proceedings regarding Sir George Maxwell, it is gravely set forth, that the voice of evil spirits is "rough and goustie;" and, to crown all, Lilly in his "Life and Times," informs us, that they speak Erse—and, adds he, "When they do so, it's like Irishmen, much in the throat!"

breathed, and there was not in all Scotland a man more feared than the wizard Soulis, the Lord of Hermitage.

"He rode forth in the morning with twenty of his chosen men behind him, and wheresoever they passed the castle or the cottage where the occupier was the enemy of Soulis or denied his right to the crown,[1] they fired the latter, destroyed the cattle around the former, or he sprinkled upon them the dust of a dead man's hand, that a murrain might come amongst them.

"But as they rode by the side of the Teviot he beheld fair Marion, the betrothed bride of young Walter, the heir of Branxholm, riding forth with her maidens, and pursuing the red deer. 'By this token, spirit,' muttered Soulis, joyously, 'thou hast not lied—to-night young Branxholm's bride shall sit within my bower.'

"He dashed the spur into the side of his fleet steed, and, although Marion and her attendants forsook the chase and fled, as they perceived him, yet, as though his *familiar* gave speed to his horse's feet, in a few seconds he rode by the side of Marion, and throwing out his arm, he lifted her from the saddle while her horse yet flew at its fastest speed, and continued its course without its fair rider.

"She screamed aloud, she struggled wildly, but her attendants had fled afar off, and her strength was feeble as an insect's web in his terrible embrace. He held her upon the saddle before him—

"'Marion!—fair Marion!' said the wizard and ruffian lover, 'scream not—struggle not—be calm, and hear me. I love thee, pretty one!—I love thee!' and he rudely raised her lips to his. 'Fate hath decreed thou shalt be mine, Marion—and no human power shall take thee from me. Weep not—strive not. Hear ye not, I love thee—love thee fiercely, madly, maiden, as a she-wolf doth its cubs. As a river seeketh the sea, so have I sought thee, Marion: and now thou art mine—fate hath given thee unto me, and thy fair cheeks shall rest upon a manlier bosom than that of Branxholm's beardless heir. Thus saying, and still grasping her before him, he again plunged his spurs into his horse's sides, and

[1] If legitimacy could have been proved on the part of the grandmother of Lord Soulis, he certainly was a nearer heir to the crown than either Bruce or Baliol.

he and his followers rode furiously towards Hermitage Castle.'

"He locked the gentle Marion within a strong chamber—he

" 'Wooed her as the lion wooes his bride.'

"And now she wept, she wrung her hands, she tore her raven hair before him, and it hung dishevelled over her face and upon her shoulders. She implored him to save her, to restore her to liberty; and again finding her tears wasted and her prayers in vain, she defied him, she invoked the vengeance of Heaven upon his head; and at such moments, the tyrant and the reputed sorcerer stood awed and stricken in her presence. For there is something in the majesty of virtue, and the holiness of innocence, as they flash from the eyes of an injured woman, which deprives guilt of its strength, and defeats its purpose, as though Heaven lent its electricity to defend the weak.

"But, wearied with importunity, and finding his threats of no effect, the third night that she had been within his castle, he clutched her in his arms, and while his vassals slept, he bore her to the haunted dungeon, that the spirit might throw its spell over her and compel her to love him. He unlocked the massy door. The faint howls of the dog were still heard from the corner of the vault. He placed the lamp upon the ground. He still held the gentle Marion to his side, and her terror had almost mastered her struggles. He struck his clenched hand upon the huge chest—he cried aloud—'Spirit! come forth!'

"Thrice he repeated the blow—thrice he uttered aloud his invocation. But the spirit arose not at his summons. Marion knew the tale of his sorcery—she knew and believed it—and terror deprived her of consciousness. On recovering, she found herself again in the strong chamber where she had been confined, but Soulis was not with her. She strove to calm her fears, she knelt down and told her beads, and she begged that her Walter might be sent to her deliverance.

"It was scarce daybreak when the young heir of Branxholm, whose bow no man could bend, and whose sword was terrible in battle, with twice ten armed men arrived before Hermitage Castle, and demanded to speak with Lord Soulis. The warder blew his horn, and Soulis and his attendants came forth and looked over the battlement.

"'What want ye, boy,' inquired the wizard chief, 'that ere the sun be risen, ye come to seek the lion in his den?'

"'I come,' replied young Walter boldly, 'in the name of our good king, and by his authority, to demand that ye give into my hands, safe and sound, my betrothed bride, lest vengeance come upon thee.'

"'Vengeance! beardling!' rejoined the sorcerer; 'who dares speak of vengeance on the house of Soulis?—or whom call ye king? The crown is mine—thy bride is mine, and thou also shalt be mine; and a dog's death shalt thou die for thy morning's boasting.'

"'To arms!' he exclaimed, as he disappeared from the battlement, and within a few minutes a hundred men rushed from the gate.

"Sir Walter's little band quailed as they beheld the superior force of their enemies, and they where in dread also of the sorcery of Soulis. But hope revived within them when they beheld the look of confidence on the countenance of their young leader, and thought of the strength of his arm, and the terror which his sword spread.

"As hungry tigers spring upon their prey, so rushed Soulis and his vassals upon Sir Walter and his followers. No man could stand before the sword of the sorcerer. Antagonists fell as impotent things before his giant strength. Even Walter marvelled at the havoc he made, and he pressed forward to measure swords with him. But, ere he could reach him, his few followers who had escaped the hand of Soulis and his host, fled and left him to maintain the battle single-handed. Every vassal of the sorcerer, save three, pursued them; and against these three, and their charmed lord, young Walter was left to maintain the unequal strife. But, as they pressed around him, 'Back!' cried Soulis, trusting to his strength and to his charm; 'from my hand alone must Branxholm's young boaster meet his doom. It is meet that I should give his head as a toy to my bride, fair Marion.'

"'Thy bride, fiend!' exclaimed Sir Walter; 'thine!—now perish!' and he attacked him furiously.

"'Ha! ha!' cried Soulis, and laughed at the impetuosity of his antagonist, while he parried his thrusts; 'take rushes for thy weapon, boy; steel falls feckless upon me.'

"'Vile sorcerer!' continued Walter, pressing upon him more fiercely; 'this sword shall sever thy enchantment.'

"Again Soulis laughed, but he found that his contempt availed him not, for the strength of his enemy was equal to his own, and in repelling his fierce assaults, he almost forgot the charm which rendered his body invulnerable. They fought long and desperately, when one of the followers of Soulis, suddenly and unobserved, thrusting his spear into the side of Sir Walter's horse, it reared, stumbled, and fell, and brought him to the ground.

"'An arrow-schot!'[1] exclaimed Soulis; 'wherefore, boy, didst thou presume to contend with me?' And suddenly springing from his horse, he pressed his iron heel upon the breast of his foe, and turning also the point of his sword towards his throat—

"'Thou shalt not die yet,' said he; and turning to the three attendants who had not followed in the pursuit, he added—'Hither—bind him fast and sure.' Then did the three hold him on the ground, and bind his hands and his feet, while Soulis held his naked sword over him.

"'Coward and wizard!' exclaimed Walter, as they dragged him within the gate, 'ye shall rue this foul treachery.'

"'Ha! ha! vain, boasting boy!' returned Soulis, 'thou indeed shalt rue thy recklessness.'

"He caused his vassals to bear Walter into the strong chamber where fair Marion was confined, and, grasping him by the neck, while he held his sword to his breast, he dragged him towards her, and said sternly—'Consent thee, now, maiden, to be mine, and this boy shall live,—refuse, and his head shall roll before thee on the floor as a plaything.

"'Monster!' she exclaimed, and screamed aloud; 'would ye harm my Walter?'

"'Ha! my Marion!—Marion!' cried Walter, struggling to be free. And, turning his eyes fiercely upon Soulis, 'Destroy me, fiend,' he added, 'but harm not her.'

"'Think on it, maiden,' cried the sorcerer, raising his sword; 'the life of thy bonny bridegroom hangs upon thy word. But ye shall have until midnight to reflect on it. Be mine, then, and harm shall not come upon him or thee; but

[1] When cattle died suddenly, it was believed to be by an arrow-schot—that is, shot or struck down by the invisible dart of a sorcerer.

a man shall be thy husband, and not the boy whom he hath brought to thee in bonds.'

"'Beshrew thee, vile sorcerer!' rejoined Walter, 'were my hands unbound, and unarmed as I am, I would force my way from the prison, in spite of thee and thine!'

"Soulis laughed scornfully, and again added—'Think on it, fair Marion.'

"Then did he drag her betrothed bridegroom to a corner of the chamber, and ordering a strong chain to be brought, he fettered him against the wall; in the same manner, he fastened her to the opposite side of the apartment; but the chains with which he bound her were made of silver.

"When they were left alone, 'Mourn not, sweet Marion,' said Walter, 'and think not of saving me—before to-morrow our friends will be here to thy rescue; and, though I fall a victim to the vengeance of the sorcerer, still let me be the bridegroom of thy memory.' Marion wept bitterly, and said that she would die with him.

"Throughout the day, the spirit of Lord Soulis was troubled, and the fear of come evil sat heavy on his heart. He wandered to and fro on the battlements of his castle, anxiously looking for the reproach of his retainers, who had followed in pursuit of the followers of Branxholm's heir. But the sun set, and the twilight drew on, and still they came not; and it was drawing towards midnight when a solitary horseman spurred his jaded steed towards the castle gate. Soulis admitted him with his own hand into the court-yard; and, ere the rider had dismounted, he inquired of him, hastily, and in a tone of apprehension—

"'Where be thy fellows, knave? and why come alone?'

"'Pardon me, my lord,' said the horseman, falteringly, as he dismounted; 'thy faithful bondsman is the bearer of evil tidings.'

"'Evil slave!' exclaimed Soulis, striking him as he spoke, 'speak ye of evil to me? What of it?—where are thy fellows?'

"The man trembled, and added—'In pursuing the followers of Branxholm, they sought refuge in the wilds of Tarra, and being ignorant of the winding paths through its bottomless morass, horses and men have been buried in it—they who sank not fell beneath the swords of those they had pursued, and I only have escaped.'

"'And wherefore did ye escape, knave?' cried the fierce sorcerer—'why did ye live to remind me of the shame of the house of Soulis?' And, as he spoke, he struck the trembling man again.

"He hurried to the haunted dungeon, and again performed his incantations, with impatience in his manner and fury in his looks. Thrice he violently struck the chest, and thrice he exclaimed, impetuously—

"'Spirit! come forth!—arise and speak with me?'

"The lid was lifted up, and a deep and angry voice said—'Mortal! wherefore hast thou summoned me before the time I commanded thee? Was not thy wish granted? Steel shall not wound thee—cords bind thee—hemp hang thee—nor water drown thee. Away!'

"'Stay!' exclaimed Soulis—'add nor fire consume me?'

"'Ha! ha!' cried the spirit in a fit of horrid laughter that made even the sorcerer tremble—'*Beware of a coming wood!*' And with a loud clang, the lid of the chest fell, and the noise as of thunder beneath his feet was repeated.

"'Beware of a coming wood!' muttered Soulis to himself, 'what means the fiend?'

"He hastened from the dungeon without locking the door behind him, and, as he hurried from it, he drew the key from his bosom, and flung it over his left shoulder, crying, 'keep it, spirit!'

"He shut himself up in his chamber to ponder on the words of his familiar, and on the extirpation of his followers; and he thought not of Marion and her bridegroom until daybreak, when, with a troubled and a wrathful countenance, he entered the apartment where they were fettered.

"'How now, fair maiden?' he began; 'hast thou considered well my words?—wilt thou be my willing bride, and let young Branxholm live? or refuse, and look thy fill on his smooth face, as his head adorns the point of my good spear?'

"'Rather than see her thine,' exclaimed Walter, 'I would thou shouldst hew me in pieces, and fling my mangled body to your hounds.'

"'Troth! and 'tis no bad thought,' said the sorcerer; 'thou mayest have thy wish. Yet, boy, ye think that I have no mercy: I will teach thee that I have, and refined mercy too.

Now, tell me truly were I in thy power as thou art in mine, what fate would ye award to Soulis?'

"'Then, truly,' replied Walter, 'I would hang thee on the highest tree in Branxholm woods.'

"'Well spoken, young Strong-bow,' returned Soulis; 'and I will show thee, though ye think I have no mercy, that I am more merciful than thou. Ye would choose for me the highest tree, but I shall *give thee the choice of the tree from which you may prefer your body to hang*, and from whose top the owl may sing its midnight song, and to which the ravens shall gather for a feast. And thou, pretty face,' added he, turning to Marion, 'sith you will not, even to save him, give me thine hand, i' faith if I may not be thy husband, I will be thy priest and celebrate your marriage, for I will bind your hands together and ye shall hang on the next branch to him.'

"'For that I thank thee,' said the undaunted maiden.

"He then called together his four remaining armed men, and placing halters round the necks of his intended victims, they were dragged forth to the woods around the Hermitage, where Walter was to choose the fatal tree.

"Now a deep mist covered the face of the earth, and they could perceive no object at the distance of half a bow-shot before them; and, ere he had approached the wood where he was to carry his merciless project into execution—

"'The wood comes towards us!' exclaimed one of his followers.

"'What!—*the wood comes!*' cried Soulis, and his cheek became pale, and he thought on the words of the demon—'*Beware of a coming wood!*'—and, for a time, their remembrance, and the forest that seemed to advance before him, deprived his arm of strength, and his mind of resolution, and, before his heart recovered, the followers of the house of Branxholm to the number of fourscore, each bearing a tall branch of a rowan tree in their hands,[1] as a charm against his sorcery, perceived, and, raising a loud shout, surrounded him.

"The cords with which the arms of Marion and Walter were

[1] It is probable that the legend of the "*coming wood*," referred to in tradition respecting Lord Soulis is the same as that from which Shakspeare takes Macbeth's charm—

"Till Birnam wood shall come to Dunsinane."

The circumstances are similar.

bound were instantly cut asunder. But, although the odds against him were as twenty to one, the daring Soulis defied them all. Yea, when his followers were overpowered, his single arm dealt death around. Now, there was not a day that passed that complaints were not brought to King Robert, from those residing on the Borders, against Lord Soulis, for his lawless oppression, his cruelty, and his wizard craft. And, one day there came before the monarch, one after another, some complaining that he had brought diseases on their cattle, or destroyed their houses by fire, and a third that he had stolen away the fair bride of Branxholm's heir; and they stood before the king and begged to know what should be done unto him. Now the king was wearied with their importunities and complaints, and he exclaimed, peevishly and unthinkingly—'*Boil him, if you please, but let me hear no more about him.*' But,

——" 'It is the curse of kings to be attended
By slaves that take their humour for a warrant;'

and when the enemies of Soulis heard these words from the lips of the king, they hastened away to put them in execution; and with them they took a wise man, one who was learned in breaking the spells of sorcery,[1] and with him he carried a scroll, on which was written the secret wisdom of Michael the Wizard; and they arrived before Hermitage Castle, while its lord was contending single-handed against the retainers of Branxholm, and their swords were blunted on his buckler, and his body received no wounds. They struck him to the ground with their lances; and they endeavoured to bind his hands and his feet with cords, but his spell snapped them asunder as threads.

"'Wrap him in lead,' cried the wise man, 'and boil him therewith, according to the command of the king; for water and hempen cords have no power over his sorcery.'

"Many ran towards the castle, and they tore the lead from the turrets, and they held down the sorcerer, and rolled the

[1] Dr. Leyden represents this personage as being "True Thomas, Lord of Ersylton;" but the Rhymer was dead before the time fixed by tradition of the death of Lord Soulis, which took place in the reign of Robert the Bruce, who came to the crown in 1308, and the Rhymer was dead before 1299, for, in that year, his son and heir granted a charter to the convent of Soltra, and in it he describes himself *Filius et hæres Thomæ Rymour de Erceldon.*

sheets around him in many folds, till he was powerless as a child, and the foam fell from his lips in the impotency of his rage. Others procured a caldron, in which it was said many of his incantations were performed, and the cry was raised—

"'Boil him on the Nine-stane rig!'

"And they bore him to where the stones of the Druids are to be seen till this day, and the two stones are yet pointed out from which the caldron was suspended. They kindled piles of faggots beneath it, and they bent the living body of Soulis within the lead, and thrust it into the caldron; and, as the flames arose; the flesh and the bones of the wizard were consumed in the boiling lead.—Such was the doom of Soulis.

"The king sent messengers to prevent his hasty words being carried into execution, but they arrived too late.

"In a few weeks there was mirth and music, and a marriage feast in the bowers of Branxholm, and fair Marion was the bride."

THE BARON'S VOW.

THE Lady Margaret was a Scottish Baron's daughter, lovely in feature, and the idol of her father. When she was but a child, the baron had entered into a compact with the Thane of Glendhu, a neighbouring chief, that at a marriageable age she should wed his son. At the Thane's death, the lad was sent abroad to receive his education, and learn the art of war. The Lady Margaret grew a beauty, and many were the suitors for her hand; but on none but the young Ranald, nephew to the Thane of Glendhu, would she look with favouring eyes. The baron saw her growing love for Ranald, and told her of his vow. All was despair; and Ranald, hopeless, left his native land. The baron now repented of his compact, but it was too late.

As the natal day of Margaret drew near, the day on which she would become nineteen, great were the preparations of the baron. Oxen were ordered to be slaughtered, beer was brewed, and many articles of luxury were sent for to the neighbouring town. The morning of the expected day arrived; and then her father told her that her lover, the young Thane of Glendhu, who had just come to Scotland, had been invited to the grand ball which he proposed giving in the evening. At the same time he said that his orders were that all should be masked. "This," added he, "I have done that no one may see the workings of your countenance when you receive the Thane." It was in vain that the afflicted Lady Margaret pled most movingly for a private meeting; but her father was deaf to her entreaties, while he affirmed that his precaution of the mask would do away with all objections, and was so peremptory in the matter, that, as usual, she acquiesced; and having thanked

and kissed his dutiful daughter, he withdrew from her with renewed youth in his step and joy in his eye.

Now, "there was wassail in the baron's hall," and music, mirth, and revelry. The evening wore on; and, at length, the Thane of Glendhu was announced. Surrounded by his retainers, he entered the hall with a bold step, amid the baron's welcomings, and took his seat. He was also masked. It was not long ere he sought the Lady Margaret, and led her out to dance. Nor were there any present whose eyes did not follow them with admiration. The dance ended, the Thane led her to a seat, and, sitting down beside her, began to question her of her love, for he had heard of her affection for young Ranald. Lady Margaret confessed all, and told him that though she had no heart to give, for her father's sake, she would be his wife, if he accepted her on these terms. But now her father told her in her ear, she must presently prepare to keep her word, as this must be her bridal-night. Her lover, too, pressed on his suit to have it so. The priest was called for; but ere the ceremony began, the baron desired that all should unmask. What was the joy of the Lady Margaret to behold, when the Thane's mask was removed, the features of Ranald, who, his cousin being dead, was now the Thane of Glendhu. And now was the castle filled with joyous greetings; and many a wassail bowl was drained to the health and happiness of the noble Thane and that of his lovely bride.

PART VI.

LEAVES

FROM THE

LIFE OF ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

EVERY reader has heard of the infamous speculation which is still known by the name of the South Sea Bubble. It produced a mania in the mercantile world, and brought ruin and misery to the hearths of thousands. Many who laid their head upon their pillow at night believing themselves to be rich, awoke beggars in the morning. Now, at the time when the South Sea scheme was at its height, there resided in Newcastle a Mr. Hamilton, who had come from the neighbourhood of Peebles, when but a mere boy, as a clerk to a merchant; but he possessed much of the caution, the sobriety, and the prudence for which many of his countrymen are noted; and he not only obtained the confidence of his employers, but rose to be an eminent merchant himself. For more than thirty years he carried on business prosperously; he was believed to be wealthy, and he was so. But he had always been a speculative man, one whose temperament was too ardent, and he entered into the South Sea project with his whole heart, embarking in it his entire capital. He was a widower, and had an only son, named Alexander, who, at the age of twenty-one, he took into partnership with himself. The senior Mr. Hamilton was a man who well knew the painful labour attending self teaching, for he had himself experienced it; and, though he had always intended his son to be a merchant, he had sent him to Cambridge for his education, saying, "A British merchant is a citizen of the world,

and stands in greater need of more languages than one, than a divine does. Therefore, my son shall be a scholar."

Alexander accordingly passed through his academical studies with credit to himself; and, as has been said, when he had attained the age of twenty-one, his father took him into partnership. But, before he was twenty-three he married Isabella Anderson, the daughter of a gentleman who was then his father's principal clerk, but who had himself been an extensive merchant, until misfortune reduced him to the situation which he then occupied. She was somewhat younger than Alexander; and although a lovely girl, yet her virtues and the sweetness of her temper far exceeded her personal attractions. The elder Mr. Hamilton, being aware of her many excellent qualities, though he knew her to be portionless, was not averse to her marriage with his son. But they had not been married twelve months, when the high blown bubble burst, and the old merchant found himself a beggar. He took it deeply to heart, and, in the language of the mercantile world, he never raised his head again; but he sat sighing and pining away, like a broken-hearted child, and within six weeks he sank into the grave a ruined man.

Alexander, finding that the firm was indeed bankrupt, and that there was but little prospect of his again succeeding in Newcastle, where his pride revolted from becoming the servant of others, left his young wife with her father, and proceeded to London, where he doubted not but that amongst those who had received from his parent many thousands of pounds, he should soon be enabled to obtain a situation which would enable him to support himself and his Isabella in comfort.

His purse was, in truth, light when he arrived in the metropolis; and having taken lodgings in a mean coffee-house in Ratcliffe Highway, he despatched a note to a gentleman with whom they had dealt extensively, and, without entering into particulars, requested the loan of twenty pounds. He wrote, because he was conscious that he had not the assurance to solicit the favour personally; and he did solicit it, knowing that, before he could obtain a situation in London, money to support him in the interim was necessary. From that gentleman he received an answer by the bearer of

his own note, in which no notice was taken of his father's misfortunes or death, but the writer penned his reply as though he were aware of neither, and expressed his regret that, during the day, a circumstance occurred which deprived him of the pleasure he should have felt in serving Mr. Hamilton, and that he was extremely sorry he could not then accommodate him with the trifle he requested. He added, in continuance, that he supposed, from the place from whence Mr. Hamilton's letter was dated, that his embarrassment proceeded from some youthful frolic, and he considered that the best method of discharging the debts of such creditors, was to give their persons over to the power of the magistrates.

"Such, then," exclaimed Alexander, tearing the letter in pieces, "such is the friendship of this world!"

He was aware that the person to whom he had written was acquainted with the ruined fortunes of his house; and it was gall to his spirit to find that he not only wrote as if ignorant of them, but addressed him with the unfeeling familiarity of cold politeness, attributing to the folly of youth what he well knew to be the effect of misery and ruin.

He applied to another without obtaining any answer whatever; and the third to whom he applied, having read his note, sent a verbal message by the bearer, saying, "Tell Mr. Hamilton that Mr. —— is not at home."

Indignant at the treatment of supposed friends, on the evening of the second day he discharged his bill at the coffee-house (on doing which he had but a few shillings left), and resolved to call personally on an old college associate who had been often obliged to him, and who then was indebted to him more than a hundred pounds. This university companion, after coming of age, had fitted up a house in a style of absurd extravagance in Leicester Square.

I should have told you that, previous to Alexander's proceeding to London, he had been compelled to dispose of the best part of his apparel to support his wife and himself, and at the time we speak of, his appearance was what ought to be termed *shabby genteel.* He proceeded to the house of his friend, and striking upon the huge brass knocker, in the absence of the porter, a pert little French valet, with powdered hair, peeped cautiously from behind the door, and surveying

him with a glance of aversion and contempt, in which he no doubt set him down to be a dun, he inquired—"Vat you vant, fellow?"

"The Honourable Edward Stafford, your master," said Alexander firmly.

"Mon Dieu! ha! ha! ha!" said the little Gaul, and attempted to thrust the door in his face; but Alexander, perceiving his intention, thrust forth his hand with a force that made the door fly back upon its hinges, and caused the huge brass knocker to sound an unusual and unceremonious alarm through the house, and at the same time drove the little powdered piece of foreign impertinence upon his back at the further end of the lobby.

"Moorder! moorder!" shouted the little valet, sprawling upon his back, and kicking with his feet upon the floor, till kitchen-maids, housekeeper, cook, butler and all the personages in the Honourable Edward Stafford's establishment, came rushing around him, holding up their hands.

"*O sacra Marie*! cried the little valet, as they raised him to his feet; "de tief! de savage! vould commit von moorder! —*Ma foi!* it be de miracle I be alive!" and, gathering himself upon his hands and knees, he muttered, eyeing him askance—*Je voudrais qu'il s'en alat!*"

The Honourable Edward Stafford rushed also to the lobby, arrayed in a dressing gown, having sprung from the hands of a hair-dresser, who was performing a piece of work upon his ringlets for which he did not consider the valet qualified; and to give additional effect to the figure which he now made in the midst of his servants, he appeared with the one side of his head in curls, while a comb was left sticking in the other.

"What! in the name of the tower of Babel!" cried, or rather squeaked Mr. Stafford—"what is the meaning of this?"

Alexander, whose natural humour returned at the risible scene before him, approached smiling; and extending his hand, said—"What, don't you know me, Ned?"

"Back! back!" exclaimed the honourable and gentle Edward Stafford; "the effluvia of thy garments is poison to my nostrils! Faugh!—know thee—why, thou art a moving tar barrel!" There was some cause for this last remark: for Alexander had slept with the common seamen during his pas-

sage to London, and his clothes yet bore witness to the pitchy fragrance of his bed-chamber. But Mr. Stafford, calling for an opera-glass, raised it to his eye, and surveying him for a few moments, inquired—"Why, who are you? Your face—I have seen it somewhere? Who are you?"

"Have you forgot Cambridge and Alexander Hamilton?" said the other.

"Sandy Hamilton?" exclaimed Stafford, rising an inch, as if in surprise—"we always call you Sandy. But come, let me hear this lark—'tis a prime one, I will vow, from your appearance; and yet you were no lad for life either," he added, as he coldly held out his forefinger, and turned to conduct him into an apartment.

Alexander, having related to him his present situation, requested from him payment of such a portion of his college debt as he might find convenient.

"A plaguy odd affair, 'pon my honour!" drawled out Stafford; "but I'm sorry I can't oblige you just at this moment. Never was a poor dog so confoundedly dunned! I am obliged to bilk the bailiffs at every corner. 'Pon my word, Sandy, I have had as many *Bills of Middlesex* served upon me, within these six months, as would fill a stage coach! Nothing could be so provoking!—My rascal of a tailor, too, got a *Quare claussum* popped into my hands only this morning! Lost a cool five hundred last night, also! So you see, I am involved on all sides. There is no way of redemption for me, that I can see, but taking a walk across Blackfriars, I do say that it is confoundedly hard that one can't oblige one's friends—but I hope you see, my dear fellow, that it is impossible. I am sorry for you, but I can't help it at present—you must see that plain enough. Only, at the same time, your outward man seems approaching to the third and fourth letters of the alphabet—and, if there be anything in my wardrobe that would be of service—"

Here he paused—and be it known, gentle reader, that the Honourable Edward Stafford was one of the most diminutive of men; and as he stood by the side of Alexander, the crown of his head did not reach his shoulder. He again proceeded—"But why, Sandy, you know, when you were at Cambridge, you were the Apollo, nay, the Adonis, of all the heiresses and rich dowagers within seven leagues. Many

of them are in town now, and would be glad of an opportunity——"

"Sir," said Alexander, reprovingly, "you forget that I am a husband."

"Yes, yes, so you are," drawled out Mr. Stafford; "but that need not cause you to make sermons against your own preferment. I remember now, it was a low match—the daughter of one of your father's clerks. O Sandy! Sandy!—I thought you had more spirit."

"Sir," replied Alexander, "my wife is the daughter of an honest man, whom you contributed to bring low and to ruin;" and casting upon him a look of scorn, which caused the small gentleman to make precipitate retreat behind his chair, he added, with a sneer—"Farewell, Mr. Stafford, and I wish you joy of your hopeful prospects." Thus saying, and without waiting a reply, he left the house.

It was now July, and one hope remained. A gentleman who held a seat in the House of Commons, and who owed his return to the money advanced by the late Mr. Hamilton, and the activity and zeal of Alexander, professed to be touched by his misfortunes, and promised to obtain for him a situation under government, which was then vacant. The day on which he was to be installed into the office was named; and Alexander, in the fulness and gladness of his heart, wrote for Isabella to come to London.

It may here be as well to inform the reader that the Honourable Edward Stafford, of whom we have spoken, was connected with the Borders. As hinted by Alexander, he had been one of those who had contributed to the ruin of Isabella's father. But there was one circumstance which Alexander knew not, and which was, that for some years prior to her marriage, the Honourable Edward Stafford had been her heartless persecutor, and as a villain had beset her path. The tale of her husband's misfortunes having rekindled his hopes, he proceeded to the north to renew his plots and persecutions.

It was early in August, when a vessel, on board of which there were many passengers, sailed from the quayside of Newcastle. The morning was clear, the sky cloudless, and the villages on either side of the Tyne, appeared in summer beauty. They had passed Shields, the pilot departed, and wished them

a pleasant passage; several ladies and gentlemen promenaded the deck, contemplating the scene, Isabella, unconscious of being observed by all, sat alone on the star-board side of the companion, her elbow resting by the top of the binnacle lamp, and her eyes fixed upon the shore.

While she thus sat, an imposing little personage, wearing a superb Spanish cloak, flung with what may be termed graceful negligence across his shoulders, and having a highly flavoured cigar in his teeth, consequentially ascended the cabin stairs—looked knowingly towards the mast head—gave two or three springy struts across the after deck—cast an aristocratical glance around the passengers—stood suddenly still—bent pryingly over the companion—stole round on tip-toe, tapped Isabella familiarly on the shoulder, and throwing back his little body to its extreme altitude, he stretched out his parcel of white fingers, saying—"A study for a Rembrandt, by the Graces! I am a fortunate fellow in meeting you again; but didn't know, 'pon my honour, until lately, that my friend, Sandy Hamilton, had the happiness of being acquainted with you."

"Mr. Stafford," said Isabella, "the wife of him whom you call your friend, has hitherto been accustomed to plainer language."

"You are severe, my pretty paragon," whispered the little man; "but now that you are leaving the north country in quest of a husband, do not disfigure that lovely face with north country formality."

And casting aside both formality and delicacy himself, with the air of a wooer who presumes more upon his own importance, than the feelings of her professed to be beloved, he seated himself by her side, and with an affected and seemingly careless playfulness, threw his arm across her shoulder.

"Sir," said Isabella, rising indignantly, "you have this moment called my husband your friend—if you are ignorant of the sacred duties of a friend, or of the respect due to my sex, and the conduct becoming a gentleman, let the misfortunes of our house be my protection."

"Protection!—creature of beauty!" said he, "I will protect you with my life! Nay, do not frown; for your anger only makes your loveliness the more provoking, and calls

back the colour which your misfortunes, as you term them, are trying to banish."

"Begone, sir," said Isabella; "practise your fooleries on those who will listen to them;" and she walked to the opposite side of the vessel, whither she was immediately followed by her unabashed tormentor.

"Come, sweet one," resumed he, "do not delight in throwing lightnings from eyes where moonbeams would blush at the presence of rivals."

"Your behaviour, sir," said Isabella, "in any man, but especially in one bearing the rank of a gentleman, is contemptible, cowardly, and unmanly. On former occasions I have borne your insults without drawing upon you the chastisements which you merited; but you now profess to know me as the wife of your friend, and as such I claim your respect—or I shall know how to resent your conduct."

"An angel in a fury!" exclaimed the Hon. Edward Stafford with a theatrical start. "Respect you!—why, I adore you!—worship you!—will die for you!"

"Pitiable fool!" replied she, turning from him with disdain.

"Only the fool your eyes have made him, lovely cruelty!" rejoined he, following her, and extending his hand to lay hold of her arm.

"'Vast there, you chap!" cried the skipper—a round, red-faced, jolly-looking seaman, who had observed from the helm the conduct of Mr. Stafford; "'vast there, I say—I'll have no monkey tricks on board o' my ship. That young lady is under my especial care; for, d'ye see, her father was once one o' my owners, and so was her husband and his father before him—and I just tell ye, ceevily, my canny lad, ye had better shove your boat off."

"Fellow!" sneered Mr. Stafford, surveying him with a look of contempt, "do you know to whom you speak?"

"I neither know nor care, young gentleman," replied the skipper; "but I'll let you know that neither you nor any man shall ca' me fellow, or use any indecent liberties on board my ship, so ye had better take in a reef, or keep a look out for squalls."

"Heathen!—uncivilised Laplander!" fumed Mr. Stafford, stamping his little foot upon the deck; "do you know, sir, to whom you are opening your barbarian lips?"

"My wig! I'll tell ye what it is, young chap," vociferated the skipper, "I dinna care though ye were first cousin to the flying Dutchman; ye shall know I'm maister o' this vessel."

"Confound you and your vessel!" retorted the little man, stamping more passionately than before; "dare you open your frog's mouth to a gentleman?"

"Ye poor singet creature!—ye miserable button top!" rejoined the skipper, "has an insignificant object like you the assurance to confound anybody? Are ye no feared that I wry your neck about like a cock sparrow's? As sure as death, sir, if ye drop another word o' your insolence to me I'll capsize ye under a bucket."

"You savage! you Greenland bear!" reiterated Mr. Stafford, brandishing his clenched fist in the face of the other; "are gentlemen to endure the boorish insolence of a Hottentot like you? Look you, sir, if you don't ask my pardon instantly, before the whole ship's company, sir, I'll put a brace of bullets through your ass's head. I will, sir! Do you think with your cowardly carcass to intimidate me? Were you as big as Goliath, I'll let you know I'm a gentleman, sir!"

"Here, Jack, take the helm," roared the skipper to one of his crew; "and now, ye chattering morsel o' humanity, I'll let ye see whether you or I be the best gentleman in this ship at any bat."

He sprang forward, Edward Stafford sprang back, and the passengers sprang between them.

"Hands off, gentlemen, if you please!" said the skipper; "remember I am master o' this vessel. I wud wish to be civil to every body, but it is not in the power o' nature to put up wi' the impudence o' a creature like that; and though I'll no hurt him—smash me! he shall either haud his tongue, or he shall never speak more. Did ye hear such names as I put up wi'?"

"Unhand the ruffian, gentlemen!" cried Mr. Stafford, who had retreated amidships, and felt his courage revive under the protection of hah-a-dozen ladies. "Unhand the mountain of moving mud! I'll teach such fellows how to interfere with a gentleman! Unhand him, and I'll send him below with a piece of cold lead through his fin!" And heroically taking from his pocket a handsome silver-mounted ivory case, he placed it with a determined air upon the top

of a beef cask, again exclaiming—"Don't hold him, gentlemen—these will do for him!"

"I tell ye again, sirs," shouted the skipper, "don't hold me! Do you think a thing like that shall threaten to shoot me on board o' my own ship?" And he struggled to approach him.

"See to yourselves, gentlemen!" cried Mr. Stafford, laying his hand fiercely upon the pistol case.

"O sir!—pray sir!—dear sir!"—screamed the ladies, grasping him in their arms.

"Oh, don't be alarmed," said the little Honourable; "'pon honour, I shall only wing him!—I have had some experience in these matters."

The skipper made a desperate rush forward—the ladies screamed louder—Mr. Stafford seized the pistol case furiously, crying—"Then die, fellow!"—

His exclamation was cut short—a lady grasped the terrible pistol case; it opened in the struggle, and the hateful weapons fell upon the deck, though not in the shape of pistols, but the honourable gentleman's sea stock of cigars! The gentlemen laughed—the ladies tittered.

"It has ended in *smoke*, sir," said a fair punster.

"You can still *fire* them!" added another.

And the skipper, laughing like the mirth of a hoarse wave, taking him firmly by the ear with his finger and thumb, said—"Gather them up, sir—gather up your *fire arms!*" And, as Mr. Stafford persisted in disobeying, another twitch was given to his ear, and another and another, while he screamed and wept through passion and pain, danced and twisted to be free, to the amusement of the spectators, who enjoyed his punishment and humiliation.

"Sir," said Isabella, addressing his tormentor, the frantic cries of Mr. Stafford having brought her from the cabin, where she retired at the beginning of their altercation; "if a fly sting us, we may drive it away, without taking pleasure in its tortures; and it is but a cowardly revenge to torment an insect."

"Well, ma'am," said the skipper, withdrawing his hand from the ear of the other; "I have no wish to hurt the thing; only, after his impudence to you as well as to mysel', he had better have a care what sort o' colours he hoists for the rest o' the passage—that's all." The agony and con-

fusion of Mr. Stafford cannot be described. He blushed, swore, threatened, and wept by turns—rushed to the cabin, hurried back, threw his card in the captain's face—stamped, stormed, and vowed vengeance, till he became silent from exhaustion. A few weeks before, he had left London for the north, partly to avoid the importunities of his creditors, whose claims had been discharged after his departure by the too fond indulgence of a foolish mother, but chiefly to carry into effect his long-cherished designs against the beautiful wife of his college companion, whose misfortunes caused him now to look upon her as an easy and lawful prize; and it was under this conviction that he watched her departure for London and took his passage in the same vessel. Mortified at the ridiculous figure he exhibited, he resolved to suspend all further attempts until they arrived at London.

But three days were not past, notwithstanding the misfortune of the pistol case, until the Honourable Edward Stafford, through the assistance of self-confidence or impudence, with pretended wit and foppish extravagance, was again the principal personage in the vessel, his brandy, his claret, and his cigars, operated marvellously in his favour with the gentlemen, every one sought his society, and called him a good fellow. The weather had hitherto been too fine for sea-sickness, and his agreeable attentions, his vivacity and elegant compliments rendered him not less a favourite with the ladies. Isabella alone despised him; while he, affecting to despise her in return, circulated foul whispers against her character. Whatever doubts there might be in the minds of his auditory respecting the veracity of his accusation, the breath of slander is exhaled from a poison so black, that for a time its passing shadow will veil the holiness of a saint, and bedim the radiance of a seraph. Isabella, therefore, was shunned by her own sex as contagious, and by the other treated with cold indifference. Occasionally she observed their scrutinizing glances, or coloured at their half audible whispers, but, in the purity of her own heart, she suspected not the cause. In the master of the vessel only she still found a friend, who, although rough as his own element, evinced towards her the tenderness of a parent.

For some days the wind was adverse, and on the Sabbath morning, being the fifth from their leaving Newcastle, it was

a dead calm. The skipper was walking backward and forward upon the deck, now glancing at the clouds, and now at the shore, with the countenance of a man who considers he has reason neither to be satisfied with himself nor with others. In the cabin some appeared to read, others yawned, while some went to the deck and instantly returned. The ladies looked at each other, whispered, fretted, and exclaimed—"How tedious!" Isabella sat silent amidst the unhappy group, "among them, but not of them."

Mr. Stafford, who hitherto had been whistling at his toilette, turned round and exclaimed—"Dumb as the foundations of a Quaker's chapel? Come," continued he, placing a couple of bottles of claret upon the table, "my pantomimic company of tragedians, allow me to administer the comforts of a calm to the necessities of your poor dumb mouths;" and, as he poured out the wine, he sang a few lines of an idle song. The company looked upon each other with a flitting expression of horror—none of them had been accustomed to hear the Sabbath so desecrated, though, as he proceeded, a few of them relaxed into a smile. But Isabella, rising, said emphatically—"Sir, the FOOL hath said in his heart, There is no God!" And she pronounced the word *fool*, with a pointed sarcasm, which, although it in some measure took from the spirit of the original, rendered it more poignant in its present application.

"Your ladyship!" replied he, sneeringly, and bowing to her with an air of mock humility. "Lily of the saints!" he added, "preach on, that the humblest of thy slaves may treasure up in his heart of hearts, the pious honey of thine own sweet lips!"

He paused, and continuing his attitude of mock humility, commenced to hum the tune which he before had attempted to sing.

"Sir," said Isabella, glancing upon him with scorn and compassion, "I pity you."

"Now for a sermon!" he added, but the words faltered on his tongue, and he sat down in confusion.

"Sermon or no sermon," said the skipper, entering from the foot of the cabin stairs, where he had descended to stop the singing himself, "I'll neither allow Sabbath-breaking, nor any wickedness that I can prevent, on board a ship o' mine."

"Come, old prig," returned Stafford, "I've paid for my passage, I suppose, and I'll have you to know that I'll amuse myself as I please. Don't think, my good fellow, that because I have listened to a little sermonizing from a pretty face that I am to be bored with your croaking." And he began to whistle a waltz.

"Poor thing!" resumed the skipper, "ye are to be pitied, after a'. I'll declare, when I see bits o' dandy creatures like you glorying in your wickedness, and doubling your nieves in the face o' Heaven, it puts me in mind o' a peacock spreading its tail to stop a whirlwind, or a cockle opening its shell to swallow a waterspout!"

At this moment the breeze sprang up, and the mate summoning all hands to deck, Mr. Stafford was left unheeded to reflect on his own folly. During the night the wind blew very fresh; and the vessel, having left the land and entered Boston Deep, laboured considerably. From the ladies' cabin issued prayers, shrieks, and groans of suffering, and every one devoutly wished to be once more blest with the tediousness of a calm; and as the vessel yawned, rocked, and staggered with the heavy swell, and the ponderous boom, with its mainsail flapping like thunder, grating, crashing, clanking, and tearing with sudden jerk, or with fearful lunge reversing the laws of gravity, and tearing both mast and vessel into the sea, scream rose upon scream, sickness and terror met in conflict. Babel seemed above them and thunder below. The wind bellowed more madly. The plunges of the vessel became more frequent and more alarming. There was a running to and fro upon the deck—a bawling and a bustle. Darkness hung over them—thick, substantial darkness, rendering the very surge invisible. The heavy clouds seemed embracing the waters, and the crushed winds roared between the pressure of their meeting. A storm, by almost imperceptible degrees, had circled round them. Every sail of the vessel was reefed, and both anchors dropped; but the chain cable snapped like the web of a gossamer, and she lunged and tugged from her remaining anchor, dragging it after her, like a fiery horse tearing from the rein of a schoolboy. The mast bent as a proud man bends in the day of adversity; the topmast went overboard, striking heavily upon the deck as it fell. It struck immediately over the bed of the Hon-

ourable Edward Stafford. A loud shriek issued from the curtained railings; they were flung open, and out sprang Mr. Stafford, dragging after him the bed-clothes, wringing his hands, and crying to Heaven for mercy. The dressed and the half-dressed now stood around the floor, clinging to each other and the furniture of the cabin for safety—each speaking and no one hearing;—but a clamour, loud, confused, and fearful, mingled with the noise of the wind and waves. Isabella alone remained tranquil. The vessel had dragged her anchor for several miles; they were in the midst of breakers, and the increased confusion upon deck announced the horrors of a lee shore, when she suddenly brought to, and half turning to the weather, a heavy sea broke over her, sweeping from the deck the boat, casks, and spars, and gushing down the cabin stairs, encompassed its terror-stricken inmates to the knees. The heart of Mr. Stafford sprang to his throat, and his feet to the table, where he remained upon his knees, wringing his hands by the side of a flickering lamp. While he was in this position, the vessel was suddenly driven upon her side; for, through the darkness of the night, another vessel had run against her, and she being cracked with age, the bowsprit of the other went through planks and timbers, and before it gave way, projected rudely several feet into the cabin, forming an unexpected and unwelcome intruder upon the motley scene of sickness and despair. Fear had already fastened the gurgling gasp in the throats of many of the passengers, when a voice from the deck exclaimed—"Ladies and gentlemen, look to yourselves!" It was the signal of death. A general groan followed. There was a rush to the cabin stairs. Calm as Isabella had hitherto been, she was now changed. It is difficult to look the grim angel in the face with indifference; but she rushed not to the stairs with the others. Mr. Stafford was driven from the table by the uncourteous visit of the bowsprit, and now wallowed upon the floor, buffeting with the brine, imagining himself at the bottom of the vast deep. The concussion of the vessel had brought his head in violent conjunction with the cabin floor, which, with his excited fears, deprived him of the consciousness of time and place; and being immersed in water, he continued to gasp, groan, shriek, and flounder upon the floor, seizing the heels of his fellow-passengers—who in their eager-

ness for escape, had wedged up the cabin door—doubting nothing, as they trode upon his delicate fingers, that he had thrust them into the mouth of a ravenous fish, which had come to feast upon his unfortunate body.

"Save me!—save me!" he cried again and again, as he continued tossing and rolling in the water.

The vessel again righted, and he was swept to the feet of Isabella, who, aroused by his cries of terror, raised him to his feet. He struggled, gasped, trembled. His eyes and mouth opened to their utmost width—he appeared to draw the breath of an hour in a moment; and gazing round vacantly, he seemed to marvel whether he was in the world of men, or fish, or of spirits.

"You are living, brave sir!" said Isabella, sarcastically, smiling at his excess of terror; "but," added she, leaving him, "the Sabbath-breaker and the scoffer are not the most courageous in the hour of danger."

It is only necessary to add that the vessels, having got disentangled, with daybreak the storm abated; and, on the ninth day after leaving Newcastle, the vessel drew up off the Hermitage Stairs, Wapping, with the loss of topmast, anchor, and cables, beef and water casks, spars, oars, and other minor *et ceteras*. together with damaged bulwarks and hulk; but with the crew and passengers safe.

Isabella had not had an opportunity of writing to her husband, to acquaint him with the name of the vessel in which she would take her passage, nor when she would leave Newcastle; and, as they drew up in the tier, while the friends and relatives of other passengers thronged around them, to her no hand was extended. She stood as one deserted, upon the threshold of the Nineveh of nations; and the crowds that passed before her seemed as the ghosts of solitude, giving tongues to bereavement, and forms to desolation. She felt herself alone in the midst of millions, solitary as a wearied bird whose wing has drooped in the wilderness.

She went on shore, where she was immediately accosted by a hackney-coachman, whom she requested to convey her to a Mr. Fulton's in Cornhill, to whose care her husband had requested her to forward the letters she addressed to him. She was informed by the skipper that Cornhill was not above

a mile and a half from the wharf; and, as the coach drove on, passing the bustling crowds who hurried along the streets, she forgot for a moment her own feelings in contemplation of the motley scene. The coach stopped facing the Mint, and the driver, leaving his box, spoke a few words with another coachman, who immediately drove rapidly in the direction of Watling Street. After a few minutes delay, the coachman again mounted the box. She had never before looked upon a countenance where a grovelling and villainous soul had written in such broad and unblushing characters its own worthlessness. It was one of those countenances which it is hardly possible to pass upon the street without disliking. In it were pourtrayed meanness, servility, depravity, and deceit—it was purple with dissipation, and blotched with iniquity. She shuddered to find herself, though in the broad day, and in the midst of the metropolis, under the care of such a man. She began to feel conscious that they must have proceeded much farther than the distance mentioned by the skipper, and with a degree of alarm, she inquired at the driver if he rightly understood where she wished to be set down.

"Vy, yes," replied he, "I knows the house well enough; it is Mr. Fulton's of Cornhill, ain't it?"

"Yes," she answered; and he added that they would be there within five minutes, and drove on. Within the time he specified, they stopped before an elegant house in a square, the silence of which was only broken by the rattling of a few fashionable carriages. The coachman alighted, and a liveried servant stood ready to receive her. She inquired if the house to which she had been conducted was Mr. Fulton's of Cornhill, and the servant answered that it was. She, however, had been within it but a few minutes, when she became conscious that she was under the roof and in the power of the Honourable Edward Stafford. Despair gave her strength; she raised her eyes to Heaven, and in the emphatic words of Judith, prayed—"Strengthen my hand!" Grasping a fruit-knife, which lay near her, in her hand, she made a desperate effort to escape; and, although the servants aided their master in opposing her, yet, as my readers have already had a specimen of his courage, and as the heroism of his domestics were not of that description which "smiles at the drawn dagger and defies its point,"

they will not be surprised to learn that through half a dozen such assailants, one weak woman, rendered desperate, forced her escape.

Having reached Cornhill, she was from thence conducted, by one of Mr. Fulton's clerks, to Red Lion Square, where her husband then lodged. Their meeting was one of sorrow and of joy; but I need not describe it. Alexander perceived that she was agitated, and he entreated to know the cause. She, fearful of the consequences that might arise from divulging it, would have concealed it; but it is difficult for an affectionate wife to conceal from her husband aught that concerns him; and within half an hour he knew all that had passed during her passage to London, and since she had arrived. He would have rushed forth on the instant to seek revenge, but she clung around his neck, she entreated him not to leave her, and he consented to defer the punishment of Stafford to a more favourable moment.

From week to week, Alexander's expected appointment under government was delayed; and, although they had parted with almost every article of any value which they had brought with them, they began to be in want. Yet Isabella murmured not, but sought to soothe her husband and raise his drooping spirits. At length, the long wished for day on which he was to be installed into office arrived, and ten o'clock was the hour fixed by his patron for meeting him. Everything around him wore a face of joy. He now knew that wealth was unnecessary to secure happiness with one who had taught him that contentment is true riches. He longed for the appointed hour. There was a tear in Isabella's eye, but it was a tear of gratitude and happiness.

"Bless thee—my own!" she said, as he rose to depart; and in silence he kissed her cheek.

Never until now had she felt the full measure of her anxiety for the issue of an event to which her husband looked forward with passionate eagerness. Slowly and tediously the morning passed away; noon came, and the hours seemed lengthening; and evening drew on, but it brought not Alexander. The long summer day died in midnight, but no remembered footstep stopped at the threshold. The morning dawn stole upon the voiceless streets, imperceptibly filling them with the slow and silent light.

"It is another day!" she exclaimed in agony; "and where is my Alexander?"

Precisely at the appointed hour, Alexander had arrived at the house of his patron. The servant who opened the door, muttered that it was too early—that his master was not down—and requested him to remain a few minutes in an apartment adjoining the lobby. The few minutes became an hour. Alexander was mortified and in agony. The clock, measuring out the moments, seemed to remind him of the insults to which he was subjected. At length he heard the great man's foot upon the stair, and rose to meet him. And the patron passed on, and his carriage drew up to the door. Alexander sprang forward, and, in the excitement of his feelings, placed his hand upon his shoulder. The bestower of patronage turned haughtily, and demanded the cause of the interruption. Alexander returned his glance with equal haughtiness, and demanded to know how he had dared first to mock and now insult him.

"Begone, fellow!" exclaimed the senator, contemptuously.

"Never!" replied Alexander, "until you have apologized for that word, and for having dared to mock me."

The courage of the silent member was rather of an aspen character, and he became pale and trembled. Struggling for dignity of manner, shaking, and calling up an air of offended importance, he said he should have felt pleasure to have served him, in consideration of the kindness of his family; but added, after considerable faltering and hesitation, that he was compelled to withdraw his countenance and patronage, owing to the representations which he had heard of his habits and character, and that, in consequence, the situation he intended for him was already bestowed upon another.

"Representations regarding MY habits and character, sir?" exclaimed Alexander, "tell me who has dared to revile me?"

"My informant is a gentleman of honour and of family, one who knows you well—and beyond this I will not be braved to inform you."

"You shall!" exclaimed Alexander.

"Never!" answered the other bitterly, and calling to his servants to obtain assistance and give him into custody; and as he spoke he slid to the farther corner of the lobby. Alexander's eyes glared upon him as a wounded lion measures its

victim. There was an unearthly earnestness and determination in his manner that might have appalled a stouter heart. He grasped the trembler firmly by the arm, and in a tone more impressive than anger, slowly and solemnly inquired—

"What is the name of my defamer?"

"The Honourable Edward Stafford," stammered out the other, awed by the desperate resoluteness of his manner.

"Stafford!" exclaimed Alexander, starting back—"am I then a second time stung by a worm?—poisoned by a reptile—Stafford!" he repeated, and hurried from the house.

He had turned aside into the Park, to conceal his agitation, indulging in the secret determination to proceed to Leicester Square and seek vengeance upon his enemy; but his gestures betrayed the agitation of his spirit, and excited the loud laughter of two horsemen who rode behind him. He turned fiercely round upon the mockers of his misery—one of them was the Honourable Edward Stafford. Alexander sprang upon him, and dragged him to the ground, as a tiger springeth upon its prey. In his fury he trampled him beneath his feet, and he lay bleeding and insensible upon the ground, when his companion, having procured the assistance of the police, Alexander was taken into custody, and being brought before the magistrates was committed for trial.

Wretched and disconsolate, Isabella beheld the sun of another day set, and yet she heard nothing of her husband. She had hurried from street to street, wild and restless as the household bird, which, escaped from its cage, breaks its wings and its heart, as it flutters, without aim and without rest, through the strange wilderness of liberty. Wearied with fatigue, and well-nigh delirious with wretchedness, she was ready to inquire of every stranger that she met—"Have you seen my Alexander?" And again and again she returned to their silent and comfortless lodgings; but there the sound of her own sighs murmured desolation; and, in impatient agony, she exclaimed—"My husband!—my Alexander!—where shall I find him?"

She had sent messengers in every direction and to all of whom she had heard him mention but their name; and in her agony her tearful eyes had wandered over the broad Thames, fearfully and eagerly surveying its shores, and following its stream for miles, till faint and weary, she sank despairing

and exhausted on the ground. A letter from her husband was at length put into her hands, which informed her that he was then a prisoner in Newgate. She immediately hastened to the gloomy prison-house, and when she arrived before it, and beheld its ponderous gates, studded with bolts of iron, and overhung with the emblems of the felon's chain and the gibbet, she recoiled back for a few paces, and her heart failed.

Until the time of admission arrived, she wandered disconsolately in front of the prison, and on being admitted, she heard the sound as of an unruly multitude issuing from the corner of the prison whither she was conducted. She was shown into a large and noxious apartment, where about a hundred individuals of all ages, the accused and the condemned, were assembled together—some cooking, some practising the art of the pickpocket, and others holding mock courts of law. Her heart became motionless with horror as she gazed wildly round the den of guilt and pollution. On perceiving her they desisted from their amusements and boisterous mirth and gazed upon her in silent wonder. Their sudden and unusual silence aroused Alexander, who was sitting alone in a dark corner of the room; and sorrowfully raising his head, he perceived every eye turned upon his own beautiful and afflicted wife. He sprang forward, and forgetful of all around, she sank upon his bosom. He led her to a remote corner of the apartment, and pressing her hand to his breast—"Ah, my Isabella!" he whispered in agony, "this is indeed kind, to visit me in such a place and in the midst of these miserable beings!"

"Say not kind, dear husband," she replied—"what is too much for the affection of a wife to do? Horrible as this place is, but yesterday to have known that you lived, and I could have been its inmate for life."

"Isabella," added he, "for imprisonment I care but little—from a tribunal of my countrymen I have nothing to fear; but there is one constant and heart-piercing misery which is consuming me. While I am here a prisoner, who will protect, who will provide for you, my love, for you?"

A faint smile trembled over her features as she replied—"He who sheltereth the lamb from the storm! He who provideth the ravens with food!"

"But," added he, "are not we already almost without money?—And, until I am free, until"——

"Come love," said she tenderly, "do not afflict yourself with idle fears. The sparrow chirps not the less joyfully in the farmyard because the last sheaf is given to the flail; but day after day finds the little flutterer happy and contented as when it nestled in profusion. You bade me come smiling, and you only are sad. Come, love—give me one smile—fear not for me; with my needle I may be enabled to provide for myself, and to assist you."

"Isabella!" he exclaimed, starting with agitation, and smiting his hand upon his brow.

"Nay, love," she added, "start not at shadows; when real deprivations are to be averted, yield not to those of pride and imagination. Adversity is a stern master, but it relaxes its brow before a cheerful pupil. Come," she added, "let us rather speak of what I can do for my prisoner."

She endeavoured to pronounce the last word playfully; but the attempt failed, and she turned aside her head to conceal a tear.

"Nay, sweetest," said he, affectionately drawing her hand from her face, "do not weep—I will not be unhappy—for the sake of my Isabella, I will not."

But the day of trial came; Alexander was placed before his judges, and his faithful wife stood near his side. The clerk of the court rose, and, holding the indictment, said, 'Alexander Hamilton, you are charged with committing an unprovoked and outrageous assault, with intent to murder, upon the person of the Honourable Edward Stafford, in Hyde Park. Do you plead guilty or not guilty?'

"Not guilty," said the prisoner, firmly.

The counsel for the prosecution then rose—"Gentleman of the jury," said he, "I must confess I am at a loss to find words to express the deadliness of purpose, and the desperate character of the assault with which the prisoner is charged. A deed more reckless, more atrocious and criminal in its character, never was attempted. Its aim was blood!—murder at noonday—in the Park, and in the midst of hundreds. After this, where is safety to be found? Were the prisoner to go unpunished, madmen might be set at large, and assassins crowd our streets with impunity. The ferocity of a savage of the woods, when fired by victory and inflamed by the

war-whoop, is tame, compared with the brutal violence which was manifested by the prisoner. With a disregard of all personal consequences, his object was *murder!* I repeat the word—murder was his object; and he has failed in accomplishing it only through the prompt assistance of the medical gentleman to whose care my client was intrusted. I do not say this from a desire to influence you against the prisoner; but from a regard for truth, for our common safety, and the public welfare. I shall prove to you that this is not a solitary case of the prisoner's outrage; but that, on the same day on which he attempted the life of the prosecutor, he was guilty of a scarcely less daring assault upon an honourable member of the House of Commons—that on former occasions he has forced his way into the house of Mr. Stafford, and endeavoured to extort money by violence. In short, the evidence is such as will leave no doubt upon your mind of the prisoner's guilt and desperate character, and assures me of what will be you verdict. What plea he will set up, I know not; but he who could attempt the life of a fellow-man in broad day, will not be nice as to the expedients to which he resorts. Should temporary insanity be urged, I need not tell you that you will consider whether it be lawful for a person subject to such fits of lunacy to be left to go at large amongst mankind, and that if such a plea be offered, you will duly examine that it be established."

During this harangue, not a muscle of Alexander's face moved; but he stood with his eyes bent upon the speaker, manifesting throughout the same calm and proud look of conscious innocence. Isabella exhibited almost the same calmness as her husband; but at times the glow of indignation and impatience flushed her cheek, and she threw upon the accuser a glance of scorn.

I will not enter into the evidence. Several of the witnesses were gentlemen of rank, who, having been spectators of the assault in the Park, gave an unprejudiced statement of what they had seen, and their testimony tended to prepare the minds of the court to give credence to the evidence of less respectable witnesses; for they confirmed the desperate character of the attack and the injury received by the prosecutor. A herd of others were suborned to aggravate the charges, and to controvert whatever evidence the prisoner

might bring forward. The case for the prosecution closed, and every hope of acquittal was destroyed. Still he maintained the same firmness; and, for a few seconds, not a sound was heard throughout the court. To the ear of Isabella, the breathless silence was as sudden thunder; hitherto, while listening to the accumulated perjuries with which her husband's ruin was sought, notwithstanding her hopelessness and agony her eye had not wandered from him; but she now turned, with a wild and imploring look, towards the jury, at once to read on their countenances the impression which the evidence had made, and to conjure them in speechless agony to believe it not. But she, shuddering, turned away from the appalling scene, and a groan burst from her bosom. She beheld in their features the cold, fixed expression of men who knew no feeling but justice; and she saw their eyes turned to her husband, but in sternness rather than in compassion.

"Prisoner," said the judge, "you have heard the charges which have been preferred against you; if you have any witnesses on your behalf, let them be brought forward; or, if you have aught to say in your defence, why judgment ought not to be pronounced against you, speak now."

"My lord," said Alexander, "I cravey our indulgence. Trusting to innocence, I have employed no counsel, and I hoped to need none. If, therefore, in the few words which I shall speak, I depart from the rules and usages of this court, I beg your protection and direction. Gentlemen of the jury," he added, "much of the evidence which has this day been given before you has not impressed upon you a firmer conviction of my wickedness than it has filled me with horror at the baseness and the perjury of which men can be found capable."

"My lord," interrupted the prosecutor's counsel, "such language is not to be borne."

"The prisoner has claimed my protection," said the judge, "and he shall have it. Proceed," added he, addressing Alexander; "but remember that unsubstantiated charges against others will only aggravate the proof already given, and militate against you."

Alexander bowed, and continued—"Gentlemen, that you believe me the guilty being that I have been described, I cannot for a moment doubt; or do I hope that I shall be

able to shake that conviction, and prove to you, between myself and the prosecutor, who is indeed the guilty party. I know well that words spoken by one situated as I now am come in a questionable form and produce but a slight impression, yet, as truth is stronger than falsehood, I would hope that what I do say may not be altogether ineffectual. That I did make an attack upon the prosecutor in the Park, is *true;* that my manner was as enraged as has been described, I admit; and that my language might be of a threatening character, I do not deny; but that my intentions were criminal, that I sought his life, is false."

He then stated the nature of his acquaintance with Stafford —his having forced his way into his house to request payment of a part of the debt which he owed him. But when he spoke of the indignities which he had offered to his wife, and of the calumnies he had whispered in the ear of him who was to procure him an appointment under government, his soul flashed truth from his eyes, every glance told a tale of scorn and wrongs. Stafford, who was present, quailed as the tide of his eloquent indignation rolled on; and could the astonished listeners have turned their eyes from the speaker to him of whom he spoke, they would have read guilt and confusion on his pale cheeks. Even the judge laid down his notes, and gazed upon the prisoner with a look of wonder. Isabella's fears passed away as she listened to the torrent of indignant eloquence which he poured forth; and while she participated in the admiration of the crowd, she felt also the affection and the pride of a wife, and starting from a seat with which she had for some time been accommodated, she pressed closer to his side, her bosom heaving, her cheeks glowing, and her beaming eyes declaring that, where he then stood as a criminal, she was proud to call him husband.

"Could any man," he exclaimed, in conclusion, "bear more than I did and not resent it? Would any of you, gentlemen —yea, would his lordship, under the same provocations, have acted otherwise than I did? If the attack was furious, was it not provoked? Or could human nature endure more and attempt less? If I am culpable, it is because I have the feelings of a man—because I am not more, or because I am not less than a man; and, if I am guilty, is my prosecutor innocent?"

The counsel for the prosecution again rose, and added—"Gentlemen of the jury, I presume it is now unnecessary for me to remind you that the prisoner having attempted murder on one of his Majesty's subjects, it is altogether unnecessary for him to perform it now upon his Majesty's English. If rhetoretical froth were proof, and sound received as evidence, the case of the prisoner might be different from what it is. But it unfortunately happens for his oratory, that froth is not proof, and that noise is not evidence. I will not insult your good sense by adverting for a moment to his shallow calumnies and malicious assertions. You will place them to the spirit of hardened wickedness that invented them. But, gentlemen, we shall now see what evidence he has to bring forward in support of his oratory, and in substantiation of his malicious and frail subterfuges."

No witnesses being likely to appear in behalf of the prisoner, the governor of the gaol voluntarily came forward and bore testimony to the excellence of Alexander's conduct while under confinement, and also to the exemplary affection and modesty manifested by his wife.

He left the witness-box, and another pause ensued, when Isabella sprang forward, stretching out her arms towards the jury, and exclaimed—"Hear me! hear me!—only for a moment—as you are men—as you are fathers—as you are Christians, hear me! Do not tear my Alexander from me—he is innocent! Yes! yes! he is innocent of the guilt attributed towards him by the wicked man who seeks his life! —innocent as your babes that may smile at their mother's breast! Save then, my husband, and Heaven will reward you! He is all that is dear to me—will you tear us asunder? If ye have hearts within you, you will not. Look on his countenance—is there guilt there? Look upon his prosecutor, upon his enemy who sits before you, and oh, can you find innocence where dissipation has left its furrows and hatred its shadows? If ye *will* do what may seem to you justice—remember to love mercy! Draw not upon your heads the misery or the blood of a human being, through the guilt of a false witness! Save, I implore you, save my hus-husband, for he is innocent!"

The judge summed up the evidence; and more than once he paused and wiped away a tear that did not disgrace his

office. "Go," he concluded, addressing the jury—"the prisoner is in your hands; and if there be a doubt upon your minds as to whether you should pronounce him guilty, give the prisoner the benefit of that doubt."

"Merciful Heaven!" exclaimed Isabella, "deliver my husband—make known his innocence to these men! She stretched her hand towards him, and cried aloud, "O my Alexander—in death—even in death, I will be yours! They shall not part us!"

And as she wept, he bent over the dock and threw his arms upon her neck, exclaiming—"Loved one, weep not. The Avenger of the oppressed will not forsake us."

The jury were rising to withdraw, every eye was moistened with Isabella's distress—while all felt conscious of her husband's doom—when a humming noise arose amidst the spectators, and "Let the jury stop!—let the jury stop!" cried many voices from the door.

The skipper of the vessel in which Isabella had come to London pressed into the court; and being sworn—

"Weel, sirs," said he, "it isn't much that the like o' me has got to say; only, ye see, Mr. Hamilton here, that ye ca' a prisoner, is an auld owner's son o' mine. I have known him since he was the height o' my knee, and he was always a guid and a cannie laddie; and I venture to say, had his father not been owre honest a man, and paid twenty shillings in the pound to everybody, he wouldna hae been in his grave to-day. As for *the thing* that is carrying on the prosecution against Mr. Hamilton, I knaw something o' him tae; and he may think himself weel off that it wasna a wife o' mine that he showed his blackguardism to; for had I been my auld maister's son, hang me! after the insults I saw him offer to this bonny lady here, when they were both passengers on board o' my ship, Jemmy Johnston take me! if I wudna hae twisted his neck off his shoulders in a moment!"

The counsel for the prosecution had risen to ridicule the evidence of the prisoner, when he was interrupted by a negro servant of the Honourable Edward Stafford, who had been touched by the fiery eloquence of Alexander, and the distress of his wife, and who rose and exclaimed, while others attempted to keep him down—"Me will speak!—Massa be de grand

villain ! Me be black, but you won't make me one black heart. De prisoner be innocent ! Massa do owe him von hundred pound, for me carried it to massa, and massa did try to steal de wife ob Massa Hamilton ; which be bad—bery bad ! Prisoner be de injured man like de poor African ! "

This involuntary testimony on the part of the negro arrested the attention of both judge and jury, and they were requesting that he should be placed in the witness box, when two gentlemen hurriedly entered the court, and pressing forward, requested to be heard. The one stated himself to be a Mr. Fulton, a broker in Cornhill. With him Alexander's father had long had extensive dealings. He has already been mentioned in the course of this narrative. Alexander had requested that his wife should address her letters to him to his counting house. But he was abroad when Alexander reached London, and he only arrived on the evening before his trial. He knew the services which his friend, the elder Hamilton, and his son also, had conferred upon the member of Parliament of whom we have spoken, and calling upon him, and hearing the accusations that were preferred against Alexander by Stafford, he demanded that they should be probed to the bottom. They did investigate them, and they discovered them to be wholly false and without foundation. And the patron now came forward to express his contrition for the act of injustice into which he had been betrayed, and to bear his testimony against the character and malignity of the prosecutor. A change came over the countenances of the jury. The judge seemed perplexed, and was rising to sum up the evidence, when they rose as one man, and exclaimed—"*Not guilty !*"

"Not guilty, my lord," repeated the foreman of the jury ; "but it would give us pleasure to see the accuser stand where the accused has this day stood."

The spectators burst into a shout, and the Honourable Edward Stafford endeavoured to escape from the court. All that is necessary to add is, that Alexander Hamilton became the clerk of Mr. Fulton, in a few years his partner, and eventually his successor, and his latter days were more prosperous than any that his father had known, while the worth of his wife and her affection increased with age. One word respecting the Honourable Edward Stafford, and I have done. In a few

years he became a titled beggar, and twenty years afterwards, when Alexander Hamilton, with his wife and family, came to reside in Northumberland, where they had been born and brought up, they heard of a poor gentleman at an inn in the next village, who seemed to be in great distress. They went to visit him—it was the Honourable Edward Stafford. He wept as he recognised them. In the words of holy writ, they heaped coals of fire upon his head—and with his hand in Alexander's he breathed his last, and at their own expense they buried him with his fathers. Such are a few leaves from the life of Alexander Hamilton.

THE WIFE OR THE WUDDY.

"There was a criminal in a cart
Agoing to be hanged—
Reprieve to him was granted;
The crowd and cart did stand,
To see if he would marry a wife,
Or, otherwise, choose to die!
'Oh, why should I torment my life?'
The victim did reply;
'The bargain's bad in every part—
But a wife's the worst!—drive on the cart.'"

HONEST Sir John Falstaff talketh of "minions of the moon;" and, truth to tell, two or three hundred years ago, nowhere was such an order of knighthood more prevalent than upon the Borders. Not only did the Scottish and English Borderers make their forays across the Tweed and the ideal line, but rival chieftains, though of the same nation, considered themselves at liberty to make inroads upon the property of each other. The laws of *meum* and *tuum* they were unable to comprehend. Theirs was the strong man's world, and with them *might* was *right*. But to proceed with our story. About the beginning of the seventeenth century, one of the boldest knights upon the Borders was William Scott, the young laird of Harden. His favourite residence was Oakwood Tower, a place of great strength, situated on the banks of the Ettrick. The motto of his family was "*Reparabit cornua Phœbe*," which being interpreted by his countrymen, in their vernacular idiom, ran thus—"We'll hae moonlight again." Now, the young laird was one who considered it his chief honour to give effect to both the spirit and the letter of his family motto. Permitting us again to refer to honest Falstaff, it implied that they were "gentle-

men of the night;" and he was not one who would loll upon his pillow when his "avocation" called him to the foray.

It was drawing towards midnight, in the month of October, when the leaves in the forest had become brown and yellow, and with a hard sound rustled upon each other, that young Scott called together his retainers, and addressing them, said —"Look ye, friends, is it not a crying sin and a national shame to see things going aglee as they are doing? There seems hardly such a thing as manhood left upon the Borders. A bit scratch with a pen upon parchment is becoming of more effect than a stroke with the sword. A bairn now stands as good a chance to hold and to have, as an armed man that has a hand to take and to defend. Such a state o' things was only made for those who are owre lazy to ride by night, and owre cowardly to fight. Never shall it be said that I, William Scott, of Harden, was one who either submitted or conformed to it. Give me the good, old, manly law, that 'they shall keep who can,' and wi' my honest sword will I maintain my right against every enemy. Now, there is our natural and lawful adversary, auld Sir Gideon Murray o' Elibank, carries his head as high as though he were first cousin to a king, or the sole lord o' Ettrick Forest. More than once has he slighted me in a way which it wasna for a Scott to bear; and weel do I ken that he has the will, and wants but the power, to harry us o' house an' ha'. But, by my troth, he shall pay a dear reckoning for a' the insults he has offered to the Scotts o' Harden. Now, every Murray among them has a weel-stocked mailing, and their kine are weel-favoured; to-night the moon is laughing cannily through the clouds:—therefore, what say ye, neighbours—will ye ride wi' me to Elibank? and before morning every man o' them shall have a toom byre."

"Hurra!" shouted they, "for the young laird! He is a true Scott from head to heel! Ride on, and we will follow ye! Hurra!—the moon glints owre the hill to guide us to the spoils o' Elibank! To-night we shall bring langsyne back again."

There were twenty of them, stout and bold men, mounted upon light and active horses—some armed with firelocks, and others with Jeddart staffs; while, in addition to such weapons, every man had a good sword by his side. At their head was the fearless young laird; and at a brisk pace they set off to-

wards Elibank. Mothers and maidens ran to their cottage doors, and looked after them with foreboding hearts when they rode along; for it was a saying amongst them, that "when young Willie Scott o' Harden set his foot in the stirrup at night, there were to be swords drawn before morning." They knew, also, the feud between him and the house of Elibank, and as well did they know that the Murrays were a resolute and a sturdy race.

Morn had not dawned when they arrived at the scene where their booty lay. Not a Murray was abroad; and to the extreme they carried the threat of the young laird into execution of making "toom byres." By scores and by hundreds, they collected together, into one immense herd, horned cattle and sheep, and they drove them before them through the forest towards Oakwood Tower. The laird, in order to repel any rescue that might be attempted, brought up the rear, and in the joy of his heart, he sang, and at times, cried aloud, "There will be dry breakfasts in Elibank before the sun gets oot, but a merry meal at Oakwood afore he gangs doun. An entire bullock shall be roasted, and wives and bairns shall eat o' it."

"I humbly beg your pardon, Maister William," said an old retainer, named Simon Scott, and who traced a distant relationship to the family: "I respectfully ask your pardon; but I have been in your faither's family for forty years, and never was backward in the hoor o' danger, or in a ploy like this; but ye will just alloo me to observe, sir, that wilfu' waste maks wofu' want, and I see nae occasion whatever for roasting a bullock. It would be as bad as oor neebours on the ither side o' the Tweed, wha are roast, roastin' or bakin' in the oven, every day o' the week, and makin' a stane weight o' meat no gang sae far as twa or three pounds wud hae dune. Therefore, sir, if ye will tak my advice, if ye are to hae a feast there will be nae roasting in the way. There was a fine sharp frost the other nicht, and I observed the rime lying upon the kail, so that baith greens and savoys will be as tender as a weel-boiled three-month-auld chicken; and I say, therefore, let the beef be boiled, and let them hae ladle-fu's o' kail, and ye will find, sir, that instead o' a hail bullock, even if ye intend to feast auld and young, male and female, upon the lands o' Oakwood, a quarter o' a bullock will be amply sufficient, and the

rest can be sauted doun for winter's provisions. Ye ken, sir, that the Murrays winna let us lichtly slip for this nicht's wark; and it is aye safest, as the saying is, to lay by for a sair fit."

"Well argued, good Simon," said the young laird; "but your economy is ill timed. After a night's work such as this there is surely some licence for gilravishing. I say it—and who dare contradict me?—to-night, there is not one belonging to the house of Harden, be they old or young, who shall not eat of roast meat, and drink of the best."

"Weel, sir," replied Simon, "wi' reverence be it spoken, but I would beg to say that ye are wrang. Folk that ance get a liking for dainties tak ill wi' plainer fare again; and moreover, sir, in a' my experience, I never kenned dainty bits and hardihood to go hand in hand; but, on the contrary, luxuries mak men effeminate, and discontented into the bargain."

The altercation between the old retainer and his young master ran farther; but it was suddenly interrupted by the deep-mouthed baying of a sleuth-hound; and its threatening howls were followed by a loud cry, as if from fifty voices, of —"To-night for Sir Gideon and the house of Elibank!"

But here we pause to say that Sir Gideon Murray of Elibank was a man whose name was a sound of terror to all who were his enemies. As a foe, he was fierce, resolute, unforgiving. He had never been known to turn his back upon a foe, or forgive an injury. He knew the meaning of justice in its severest sense, but not of compassion; he was a stranger to the attribute of mercy, and the life of the man who had injured him, he regarded as little as the life of the worm which he might tread beneath his heel upon his path. He was a man of middle age; and had three daughters, none of whom were what the world calls beautiful; but, on the contrary, they were what even the dependants upon his estates described as "very ordinary-looking young women."

Such was Sir Gideon Murray of Elibank; and, although the young laird of Harden conceived that he had come upon him as "a thief in the night," and some of my readers, from the transaction recorded, may be somewhat apt to take the scriptural quotation in a literal sense—yet I would say, as old Satchel sings of the Borderers of those days, they were men—

> "Somewhat unruly, and very ill to tame,
> I would have none think that I call them thieves;
> For, if I did, it would be arrant lies."

But, stealthily as the young Master of Harden had made his preparations for the foray, old Sir Gideon had got timely notice of it; and hence it was that not a Murray seemed astir when they took the cattle from the byres, and drove them towards Oakwood. But, through the moonlight there were eyes beheld every step they took—their every movement was watched and traced; and, amongst those who watched, was the stern old knight, with fifty followers at his back.

"Quiet! quiet!" he again and again, in deep murmurs, uttered to his dependants, throwing back his hand, and, speaking in a deep and earnest whisper, that awed even the slow but ferocious sleuth-hound that accompanied them, and caused it to crouch back to his feet. In a yet deeper whisper, he added, encouragingly—"Patience, my merry men!—bide your time—ye shall hae work before long go by."

When, therefore, the young laird and his followers began to disperse in the thickest of the forest, as they drove the cattle before them, Sir Gideon suddenly exclaimed—"Now for the onset!" And, at the sound of his voice, the sleuth-hound howled loud and savagely.

"We are followed!—halt! halt!—to arms! to arms!" cried the heir of Harden.

Three or four were left in charge of the now somewhat scattered herd of cattle, and to drive them to a distance; while the rest of the party spurred back their horses as rapidly as the tangled pass in the forest would permit to the spot from whence the voice of their young leader proceeded. They arrived speedily, but they arrived too late. In a moment, and with no signal save the baying of the hound, old Sir Gideon and his armed company had burst upon young Scott and old Simon, and ere the former could cry for assistance, they had surrounded them.

"Willie Scott! ye rash laddie!" cried Sir Gideon—"yield quietly, or a thief's death shall ye die; and in the very forest through which ye have this night driven my cattle, the corbies and you shall become acquaint—or, at least, if ye see not them, they shall see you and feel you too."

"Brag on, ye auld greybeard," exclaimed the youth; "but while a Scott o' Harden has a finger to wag, no power on earth shall make his tongue say, 'I am conquered!' So come on!—do your best—do your worst—here is the hand

and the sword to meet ye!—and were ye ten to one, ye shall find that Willie Scott isna the lad to turn his back, though ten full-grown Murrays stand before his face."

"By my sooth, then, callant," cried the old knight, "and it was small mercy, after what ye hae done, that I intended to show ye; and after what ye hae said, it shall be less that I will grant ye! Sae come on, lads, and now to humble the Hardens!"

"Arm! every Scott to arms!" again shouted the young laird; "and now, Sir Gideon, if ye will measure weapons, and leave your *weel-faured* daughters as a legacy to the world, be it sae! But there are lads among your clan o' whom they would hae been glad, and who, belike in *pity*, might hae offered them their hands, but who will this night mak a bride o' the green sward! Sae come on, Sir Gideon, and on you and yours be the consequence!"

"Before sunrise," returned Sir Gideon, "and the winsome laird o' Harden shall boast less vauntingly, and rue that he had broke his jeers upon an auld man. Touch me, sir, but not my bairns."

The conflict began, and on each side the strife was bloody and desperate. Bold men grasped each other by the throat, and they held their swords to each other's breasts, scowling one upon another with the ferocity of contending tigers, ere each gave the deadly plunge which was to hurl both into eternity. The report of fire-arms, the clash of swords, the clang of shields, with the neighing of maddened horses, the lowing of affrighted cattle, the howl of the sleuth-hounds, and the angry voices of fierce men, mingled wildly together, and, in one fearful and discordant echo, rang through the forest. This wild sound was followed by the low melancholy groans of the dying. But, as I have already stated, the Scotts, and the cattle which they drove before them, were scattered, and ere those who were in advance could arrive to the rescue of their friends in the rear, the latter were slain, wounded, or overpowered. They also fought against fearful odds. The young laird himself had his sword broken in his grasp, and his horse was struck dead beneath him. He was instantly surrounded and made prisoner by the Murrays: and, at the same time, old Simon also fell into their hands.

The few remaining retainers of the house of Harden gave way when they found their leader a captive, and they fled, leaving the cattle behind them. Sir Gideon Murray, therefore, recovered all that had been taken from him; and though he had captured but two prisoners, the one was the chief, and the other his principal adviser and second in command. The old knight, therefore, commanded that they should be bound with cords together, and in such rueful plight led to his castle at Elibank. It was noon before they reached it, and Lady Murray came forth to welcome her husband, and congratulate him upon success. But, when she beheld the heir of Harden a captive, and thought of how little mercy was to be expected from Sir Gideon when once aroused, she remembered that she was a mother, and that one of her children might one day be situated as their prisoner then was.

The young laird, with his aged kinsman and dependant, were thrust into a dark room; and he who locked them up informed them that the next day their bodies would be hung upon the nearest tree.

"My life and lang fasting!" exclaimed Simon, "ye surely wouldna be speaking o' sic a thing as hanging to an auld man like me. If we were to be shot or beheaded—though I would like neither the ane nor the ither—it wouldna be a thing in particular to be complained o'; but to be hanged like a dog, is so disgracefu' and unchristian like, that I would rather dee ten times in a day, than feel a hempen cravat about my neck ance. And, moreover, I must say that hanging is not treating my dear young maister and kinsman as he ocht to be treated. His birth, his rank, and the memory o' his ancestors and mine demand mair respect, and therefore I say, gae tell your maister, that, if he is determined that we are to die—though I have no ambition to cut my breath before my time—that I think, as a gentleman, it is his duty to see that we die the death o' gentlemen!"

"Silence, Simon," cried the young laird; "let Murray hang us in his bed-chamber if he will. No matter what manner o' death we die, provided only that we die like men. Let him hang us if he dare, and the disgrace be his, that is coward enough so to make an end of an enemy."

"O, sir," said Simon, "but that is poor comfort to a man that has to leave a small family behind him."

"Simon! are you afraid to die?" cried the captive laird, in a tone of rebuke.

"No, your honour," said Simon—"that is, I am no more afraid to die than other men are, or ought to be—but only ye'll observe, sir, that I have no ambition—not, as I may say, to draw my last breath upon a wuddy, but to have it very unnaturally stopped. Begging your pardon, but you are a young man, while I have a wife and family that would be left to mourn for me;—and oh, sir! the wife and the bits o' bairns press unco sairly upon a man's heart when death tries to come in the way between him and them. In exploits like that in which we were last nicht engaged, and also in battles abroad, I have faced danger in every shape a hundred times—yet, sir, to be shot in a moment as it were, or to be run through the body, and to die honourably on the field, is a very different thing from deliberately walking up a ladder to the branch o' a tree, from which ye are never to come doun in life again. And mair than that, if we had been o' Johnny Faa's gang they couldna hae treated us mair disrespectfully than to condemn us to the death they have decreed for us."

"Providing ye die bravely, Simon," said the young laird, "it is little matter what manner o' death ye die; and as for your wife and weans, fear not, for my faither's house will provide for them. For, though I fall now, there will be other heirs left to the estate o' Harden."

While the prisoners thus conversed in the place of their confinement, Lady Murray spoke unto her husband, saying—"And what, Sir Gideon, if it be a fair question, may ye intend to do wi' the braw young laird o' Harden, now he is in your power?"

He drew her gently by the arm towards the window, and pointing towards a tree which grew at the distance of a few yards, he said—"Do ye see yonder branch o' the elm tree that is waving in the wind?—To-morrow, young Scott and his kinsman shall swing there together, or hereafter say that I am no Murray."

"O guidman!" said she, "it is because I was terrified that ye would be doing the like o' that, that caused me to ask the question. Now, I must say, Sir Gideon, whatever ye may think, that ye are not only acting cruelly but foolishly!"

"I care naething about the cruelty," cried he; "what mercy did ever a Scott among them show to me or to mine? Lady Murray, the ball is at my foot, and I will kick it, though I leprive Scott o' Harden o' a head. And what mean ye, dame, by saying I act foolishly?"

"Only this, guidman," said she—"that ye hae three daughters to marry, whom the world doesna consider to be owre weel-faured, and it isna every day that ye hae a husband for ane o' them in your hand."

"Sooth!" cried he, "and for once in your life ye are right, guidwife—there is mair wisdom in that remark than I would hae gien ye credit for. To-morrow, the birkie o' Harden shall have his choice—either upon the instant to marry our daughter, Meikle-mouthed Meg, or strap for it."

"Weel, Sir Gideon," added she, "to make him marry Meg will be mair purpose-like than to cut off the head and the hope of an auld house, in the very flower o' his youth; and there is nae doubt as to the choice he will mak, for there is an unco difference between them."

"Dinna be owre sure," continued the knight; "there is nae saying what his choice may be. There is both pluck and a spirit o' contradiction in the callant, and I wouldna be in the least surprised if he preferred the wuddy. I ken, had I been in his place, what my choice would hae been."

"I daresay, Sir Gideon," replied the old lady, who was jocose at the idea of seeing one of her daughters wed, "I daresay I could guess what that choice would hae been."

"And what, in your wisdom," said he sharply, "do ye think it would hae been—the wife or the wuddy?"

"Oh Gideon! Gideon!" said she, good-humouredly, and shaking her head, "weel do ye ken that your choice would hae been a wife."

"There ye are wrang," cried he; "I would rather die a death that was before me, than marry a wife I had never seen. But go ye and prepare Meg for becoming a bride the morn, and I shall see what the intended bridegroom says to the proposal."

In obedience to his commands, she went to an apartment in which their eldest daughter Agnes, but commonly called "Meikle-mouthed Meg," then sat, twirling a distaff. The old dame sat down by her daughter's side, and after a few

observations respecting the weather, and the quality of the lint they were then torturing into threads, she said—"Weel, I'm just thinking, Meggie, that ye mak me an auld woman. Ye would be five and twenty past at last Lammas."

"So I believe, mother!" said Meggie; and a sigh, or a very deep and long-drawn breath, followed her words.

"Dear me!" continued the old lady, "young men maun be growing very scarce. I wanted four months and five days o' being nineteen when I married your faither, and I had refused at least six offers before I took him."

"Ay, mother," replied the maiden: "but ye had a weel-faured face—there lay the difference! Heigho!"

"Heigho!" responded her mother, as in pleasant raillery—"what is the lassie heighoing at? Certes, if ye get a guid man before ye be six and twenty, you may think yoursel' a very fortunate woman."

"Yes," added the maiden; "but I see sma' prospect o' that. I doubt you will see the Ettrick running through the 'dowie dells o' Yarrow,' before ye hear tell o' an offer being made to me."

"Hoot, hoot!—dinna say sae, bairn," added her mother; "there is nae saying what may betide ye yet. Ye think ye winna be married before ye are six and twenty; but truly, my dear, there has mony a mair unlikely ship come to land. Now, what wud you think o' the young laird o' Harden?"

"Mother! mother!" said Agnes, "wherefore do ye mock me? I never saw ye do that before. My faither has ta'en William Scott a prisoner; and, from what I hae heard, he will hang him in the morning. Ye ken what a man my faither is—when he says a thing he will do it; and how can you jest about the young man, when his very existence is reduced to a matter o' minutes and moments. Though rather than my faither should tak his life, if I could save him, he should tak mine."

"Weel said, my bairn," replied the old woman; "but dinna ye be put about concerning what will never come to pass. I doubtna that, before morning, ye will find young Scott o' Harden at your feet, and begging o' you to save his life, by giving him your hand and troth. and becoming his wife; and then, ye ken, your faither couldna, for shame, hang or do ony harm to his ain son-in-law."

"O mother! mother!" replied Agnes, "it will never be in my power to save him; for what ye hae said he will never think o'; and even if I were his wife, I question if my faither would pardon him, though I should beg it upon my knees."

"Oh, your faither's no sae ill as that, Meggy, my doo," said the old lady. "Mark my words—if Willie Scott consent to marry you, ye will henceforth find him and your faither hand and glove."

While this conversation between Lady Murray and her daughter took place, Sir Gideon entered the room where his prisoners were confined, and, addressing the young laird, said—"Now, ye rank marauder, though death is the very least that ye deserve or can expect from my hands, yet I will gie ye a chance for your life, and ye shall choose between a wife and the wuddy. To-morrow morning, ye shall either marry my daughter, Meg, or swing from the branch o' the nearest tree, and the bauldest Scott upon the Borders shanna tak ye down, until ye drop away, bone by bone, a fleshless skeleton."

"Good save us! most honourable and good Sir Gideon!" suddenly interrupted Simon, in a tone which bespoke his horror; "but ye certainly dinna intend to make an anatomy o' me too; or surely, when my honoured maister marries Miss Murray (as I hope and trust he will), ye will alloo me to dance at their wedding, instead o' dancing in the air, and keeping time to the music o' the soughing wind. And, O maister! for my sake, for your ain sake, and especially out o' regard to my sma' and helpless family, consent to marry the lassie, though she isna extraordinar' weel-faured; for I am sure that, rather than die a dog's death, swinging from a tree, I would marry twenty wives, though they were a' as auld as the hills, as ugly as a starless midnicht, and had tongues like trumpets."

"Peace, Simon!' cried the young laird, impatiently; "if ye hae turned coward, keep the sound o' yer fears within yer ain teeth. And ye, Sir Gideon," added he, turning towards the old knight, "in your amazing mercy and generosity, would spare my life, upon condition that I should marry your *bonny* daughter, Meg. Look ye, sir—I am Scott o' Harden, and ye are Murray o' Elibank; there

is no love lost between us; chance has placed my life in your hands—take it, for I wouldna marry your daughter though ye should gie me life, and a' the lands o' Elibank into the bargain. I fear as little to meet death as I do to throw in your teeth that, had ye fallen into my hands, I would have hung ye wi' as little ceremony as I would bring a whip across the back o' a disobedient hound. Therefore ye are welcome to do the same by me. Ye have taken what ye thought to be a sure mode o' getting a husband for ane o' your *winsome* daughters; but in the present instance, it has proved a wrong one, auld man. Do your worst, and there will be Scotts enow left to revenge the death o' the laird o' Harden."

"There, then, is my thumb, young braggart," exclaimed Sir Gideon, "that I winna hinder ye in your choice; for to-morrow ye shall be exalted as Haman was; and let those revenge your death who dare."

"Maister!—dear maister!" cried Simon, wringing his hands, "will ye sacrifice me also, and break the hearts o' my puir wife and family? O sir, accept o' Sir Gideon's proposal and marry his dochter."

"Silence! ye milk-livered slave!" cried the young laird. "Do ye pretend to bear the name o' Scott, and ye tremble like an ash leaf at the thought o' death?"

"Ye will excuse me, sir," retorted Simon, "but I tremble at no such thing; only, as I have already remarked, I have no particular ambition for being honoured wi' the exaltation o' the halter; and, moreover, I see no cause why a man should die unnecessarily, or where death can be avoided. Sir Gideon," added he, "humble prisoner as I at this moment am, and in your power, I leave it to you, if ever ye saw anything in my conduct in the field o' battle (and ye have seen me there), that could justify ony ane in calling me either milk-livered or a coward? But, sir, I consider it would be altogether unjustifiable to deprive ane o' life, which is always precious, merely because my maister is stubborn, and winna marry your daughter. But oh, sir, I am not a very auld man yet, and if ye will set me at liberty, though I am now a married man, in the event o' my ever becoming a widower, I gie ye my solemn promise, that I will marry ony o' your dochters that ye please."

"Audacious idiot!" exclaimed the old knight, raising his hand and striking poor Simon to the ground.

"Sir Gideon Murray!" cried the young laird fiercely, "are ye such a base knave as to strike a fettered prisoner? Shame fa' ye, man. Where is the pride o' the Murrays now?"

Sir Gideon evidently felt the rebuke, and withdrawing from the apartment, said, as he departed—"Remember that when the sun dial shall to-morrow note the hour of twelve, so surely shall ye be brought forth—and a wife shall be your lot, or the wuddy your doom."

"Leave me!" cried the youth impatiently, "and the gallows be it—my choice is made. Till my last hour trouble me not again."

"Sir! sir!" cried Simon, "I beg, I pray that ye will alter your determination. There is surely naething so awful in the idea o' marriage, even though your wife should have a face not particularly weel-faured. Ye dinna ken, sir, but that the young woman's looks are her worst fault; and, indeed, I hae heard her spoken o' as a lassie o' great sense and discretion, and as having an excellent temper; and oh, sir, if ye kenned as weel what it is to be married as I do, ye would think that a good temper was a recommendation far before beauty."

"Hold thy foolish tongue, Simon," cried the laird; "would ye disgrace the family wi' which ye make it your boast to be connected, when in the power and presence o' its enemies? Do as ye see me do—die and defy them."

It was drawing towards midnight, when the prison door was opened, and the sentinel who stood watch over it admitted a female dressed as a domestic.

"What want ye, or whom seek ye, maiden?" inquired the laird.

"I come," answered she mildly, "to speak wi' the laird o' Harden, and to ask if he has any dying command that a poor lassie could fulfil for him."

"Dying commands!" responded Simon; "oh, are those no awful words!—and can ye still be foolhardy enough to say ye winna marry?"

"Who sent ye, maiden?—or who are ye?" continued the laird

"A despised lassie, sir," answered she, "and an attendant upon Sir Gideon's lady, in whom ye hae a true and steadfast friend; though I doubt that, as ye hae refused poor Meg, her intercession will avail ye little."

"And wherefore has Lady Murray sent you here?" he continued

"Just, sir, because she is a mother, and has a mother's heart; and, as ye hae a mother and sisters who will now be mourning for ye at Oakwood, she thought that, belike, ye would hae something to say that ye would wish to hae communicated to them, and, if it be sae, I am come to offer to be your messenger."

"Maiden!" said he, with emotion, "speak not of my poor mother, or you will unman me, and I would wish to die as becomes my father's son."

"That's right, hinny," whispered Simon; "speak to him about his mother again—talk about her sorrow, poor lady, and her tears, and distraction, and mourning—and I hae little doubt but we shall get him to marry Meg, or do onything else, and I shall get back to my family after a'."

"What is it that ye whisper, Simon, in the maiden's ear?" inquired the laird sternly.

"O naething, sir—naething, I assure ye," answered Simon falteringly; "I was only saying that, if ye sent her ower to Oakwood wi' a message to your poor, honoured, wretched mother, that she would inquire for my poor widow, Janet, and my bits o' bairns, and that she would tell them that nothing troubled me upon my death-bed—no, no, not my death-bed, but—I declare I am ashamed to think o't:—I was saying that I was simply telling her to inform my wife and bairns, that nothing distracted me in the hour o' death, but the thocht o' being parted from them."

Without noticing the evasive reply of his dependant and fellow-prisoner, the laird, addressing the intruder, said—"Ye speak as a kind and considerate lassie. I would like to send a scrap o' a pen to my poor mother, and, if ye will be its bearer she will reward ye."

"And belike," she replied, "ye would like to hear if the good lady has an answer back, or to learn how she bore the tidings o' your unhappy fate."

"Before you could return," said he, "the time appointed

by my adversary for my execution will be past, and I shall feel for my mother's sorrows with the sympathy of a disembodied spirit."

"But," added she, "if ye would like to hear from your poor mother, or, belike, to see her—for there may be family matters that ye would wish to have arranged—I think, through the influence of my lady, Sir Gideon could be prevailed upon to grant ye a respite for three or four days; and, as he isna a man that keeps his passion long, perhaps, by that time, he may be disposed to save your life upon terms that would be more acceptable."

"No, maiden," he replied; "he is my enemy; and from him I wish no terms—no clemency. Let him fulfil his purpose—I will die; but my death shall be revenged; and tell my mother that it was my latest injunction that she should command every follower of our house to avenge her son's death, while there is a Murray left in all Scotland to repent the deed o' the knight o' Elibank."

"Oh, sweet young ma'am or mistress!" cried Simon; "bear the lady no such message; but rather, as ye hae said, try if it be possible to get your own good lady to persuade Sir Gideon to spare our lives for a few days; and, as ye say, the edge o' the auld knight's revenge may be blunted by that time, or perhaps, my worthy young maister may be brought to see things in a clearer light, and perhaps, to marry Miss Margaret, by which means our lives may be spared. For it is certainly the height o' madness in him to sacrifice my life and his own, rather than marry her before he has seen her."

"Simon," interrupted the laird, "the maiden has spoken kindly; led her endeavour to procure a respite—a reprieve for you. In your death my enemy can have no gratification; but for me—leave me to myself."

"O sir," replied Simon, "ye wrong me—ye mistake my meaning a'thegither. If ye are to die, I will die also; but do ye no think it would be as valorous and mair rational at least to see and hear the young leddy, before ye determine to die rather than to marry her."

"And hae ye," said the maiden, addressing the laird, "preferred the gallows to poor Meg, without even seeing her?"

"If I haena seen her, I hae heard o' her," said he, "and

by all account her countenance isna ane that ony man would desire to see accompanying him through the world like a shadow at his oxter."

"Belike," said the maiden, "she has been represented to you worse than she looks like—if ye saw her, ye might change your opinion; and, perhaps, after a', that she isna bonny is a' that any one can say against her."

"Wheesht, lassie," said he, "I winna be forced to onything. A Scott may be led, but he winna drive. I have nae wish to see the face o' your young mistress, for I winna hae her. But ye speak as one that has a feeling heart, and before I trust ye wi' my last letter to my poor mother, I should like to have a glance at your face, and by your countenance I shall judge whether or not it will be safe to trust ye."

"I doubt, sir," replied she, throwing back the hood that covered her head, "ye will see as little in my features as ye expect to find in my young mistress's to recommend me; but, sir, ye ought to remember that jewels are often encrusted in coarser metals, and ye will often find a delicious kernel within an unsightly shell."

"Ye speak sweetly, and as sensibly as sweet," said he, raising the flickering lamp, which burned before them upon a small table, and gazing upon her countenance; "and I will now tell ye, lassie, that, if your features be not beautiful, there is honesty and kindliness written upon every line o' them; and though ye are a dependant in the house o' my enemy, I will trust ye. Try if I can obtain writing materials to address a few lines to my mother, and I will confide in ye to deliver them."

"Ye may confide in me," rejoined she, "and the writing materials which ye desire I hae brought wi' me. Write, and not only shall your letter be faithfully delivered, but, as ye hae confided in me, I will venture to say that your life shall be spared until ye receive her answer; for I may say that what I request, Lady Murray will try to see performed. And if I can find any means in my power by which ye can escape, it shall not be lang that ye will remain a prisoner."

"Thank ye!—doubly thank ye!" cried Simon; "ye are a good and a kind creature; and though my maister refuses to marry your mistress, yet had I been single I

woula hae married you. But, oh, when ye go wi' the letter to his mother, my honoured lady, will ye just go away down to a bit white house which lies by the river side, about a mile and a half aboon Selkirk, and there ye will find my poor wife and bairns—or rather I should say my unhappy widow and my orphans—and tell them—oh, tell my wife—that I never kenned how dear she was to me till now, but that if she marries again, that my ghost will haunt her, night and day; and tell also the bairns, that, above everything, I charge them to be good to their mother."

The young laird sat down, and, writing a letter to his mother, entrusted it to the hands of the stranger girl. He raised her hand to his lips as she withdrew, and a tear trickled down his cheeks as he thanked her.

It was early on the following morning, that Meikle-mouthed Meg, as she was called, requested an interview with her father, which being granted, after respectfully rendering obeisance before him, she said—"So, faither, I understand, that it is your pleasure that I shall this day become the wife o' young Scott o' Harden. I think, sir, that it is due to the daughter o' a Murray o' Elibank, that she should be courted before she gies her hand. The young man has never seen me; he kens naething concerning me; an' never will yer dochter disgrace ye by gieing her hand to a man who only accepted it to save his neck from a hempen cord. Faither, if it be your command that I am to marry him, I will an' must marry him; but, before I just make a venture upon him for better for worse, an' for life, I wud like to hae some sma' acquaintance wi' him, to see what sort o' lad he is, and what kind o' temper he has; and, therefore, faither, I humbly crave that ye will put off the death or the marriage for a week at least, that I may hae an opportunity o' judging for mysel', how far it would be prudent or becoming in me to consent to be his wife."

"Gie me your hand, Meg," cried the old knight; "I didna think ye had as muckle spirit and gumption in ye as to say what ye hae said. But your request is useless; for he has already, point blank, refused to hae ye; and there is naething left for him, but before sunset, to strike his heels against the bark o' the auld elm tree."

"Say not that, faither," said she—"let me at least hae

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four days to become acquainted wi' him ; and if in that time he doesna mak a request to you to marry me without ony dowry, then will I say that I look even waur than I get the name o' doing."

"He shall have four days, Meg," cried the old knight ; "for your sake he will have them ; but if, at the end o' four days, he shall refuse to take ye, he shall hang before this window, and his poor, half-crazed companion shall bear him company."

With this assurance, Agnes, or as she was called, Meg, left her father, and bethought her of how she might save the prisoners and secure a husband.

The mother of the laird sat in the midst of her daughters, mourning for him, and looking from the window of the tower, as though in every form that appeared in the distance, she expected to see him, or at least to gather tidings regarding him ; when information was brought to her that he was the prisoner of Murray of Elibank.

"Then," cried she, and wept, "the days o' my winsome Willie are numbered, and his death is determined on ; for often has Sir Gideon declared he would gie a' the lands o' Elibank for his head. My Willie is my only son, my first-born, and my heart's hope and treasure ; and oh, if I lose him now, if I shall never again hear his kindly voice say '*mother!*' nor stroke down his yellow hair—wi' him that has made me sonless I shall hae a day o' long and fearfu' reckoning ; cauld shall be the hearth-stane in the house o' many a Murray, and loud their lamentation."

Her daughters wept with her for their brother's fate ; but they wist not how to comfort her ; and, while they sat mingling their tears together, it was announced to them that an humble maiden, bearing a message from the captive laird, desired to speak with her.

"Show her in!—tak' me to her!" cried the mother, impatiently. "Where is she?—what does she say?—or what does my Willie say?" And the maiden, who has been mentioned as having visited the laird in his prison, was ushered into her presence.

"Come to me, lassie—come and tell me a'," cried the old lady ; "what message does Willie Scott send to his heart-broken mother?"

"He has sent you this bit packet, ma'am," replied the

bearer; "and I shall be right glad to take back to him whatever answer ye may hae to send."

"And wha are ye, young woman," inquired the lady, "that speaks sae kindly to a mother, an' takes an interest in the fate o' my Willie?"

"A despised lassie," was the reply; "but ane that would risk her ain life to save either yours or his."

"Bless you for the words!" replied Lady Scott, as she broke the seal of her son's letter, and read:—

"My mother, my honoured mother—Fate has delivered me into the power of Murray of Elibank, the enemy of our house. He has doomed me to death, and I die to-morrow; but sit not down to mourn for me, and uselessly to wring the hands and tear the hair; but rouse every Scott upon the Borders to rise up and be my avenger. If ye bewail the loss o' a son, let them spare o' the Murrays neither son nor daughter. Rouse ye and let a mother's vengeance nerve your arm! Poor Simon o' Yarrow-foot is to be my companion in death, and he whines to meet his fate with the weakness of a woman, and yearns a perpetual yearning for his wife and bairns. On that account I forgie him the want o' heart and determination which he manifests; but see ye to them, and take care that they be provided for. As for me, I shall meet my doom wi' disdain for my enemy in my eyes and on my tongue. Even in death he shall feel that I despise him; and a proof o' this I have given him already; for he has offered to save my life, providing I would marry his daughter, Meikle-mouthed Meg. But I have scorned his proposal."—

"Ye were right, Willie! ye were right, lad!" exclaimed his mother, while the letter shook in her hand; but, suddenly bursting into tears, she continued—"No, no! my bairn was wrong—very wrong. Life is precious, and at all times desirable; and, for his poor mother's sake, he ought to have married the lassie, whate'er she may be like." And turning to the bearer of the letter, she inquired—"And what like may the leddy be, the marrying o' whom would save my Willie's life?"

"Ye have nae doubt heard, my leddy," replied the stranger, "that she isna what the world considers to be a likely lass—though, take her as she is, and ye might find a hantle worse wives than poor Meg would make; and, as to her features, I may say that she looks much the same as I

do, and, if she doesna appear better, she at least doesna look ony waur."

"Then, if she be as ye say, and look as ye say," continued the lady, "my poor headstrong Willie ought to marry her. But oh! weel do I ken that in everything he is just his faither owre again, and ye might as weel think o' moving the Eildon Hills as force him to onything."

She perused the concluding part of her son's letter, in which he spoke enthusiastically of the kindness shown him by the fair messenger, and of the promise she had made to liberate him if possible. "And if she do," he added, "whatever be her parentage, on the day that I should be free, she should be my wife, though I have preferred death to the hand o' Sir Gideon's *comely* daughter."

"Lassie," said the lady, weeping as she spoke, "my poor Willie talks a deal o' the kindness ye have shown him in the hour o' his distress, and for that kindness his mother's heart thanks ye. But do you not think that it is possible that I could accompany ye to Elibank; and, if ye can devise no means for him to escape, perhaps, if ye could get me admitted into his presence, when he saw his poor distressed mother upon her knees before him, his heart would soften, and he would marry Sir Gideon's daughter, ill-featured though she may be."

"My leddy," answered the stranger maiden, "it is little that I can promise, and less that I can do; but, if ye desire to see yer son, I think I could answer for accomplishing yer request; an' though nae guid micht come out o't, I could also say that I wud see ye safe back again."

Within an hour, Lady Scott, disguised as a peasant, and carrying a basket on her arm, set out for Elibank, accompanied by the fair stranger.

Leaving them upon their melancholy journey, we shall return to the young laird. From the windows of his prison-house, he beheld the sun rise which was to be the last on which he was to look. He heard the sentinels who kept watch over him, relieve each other; he heard them pacing to and fro before the grated door, and as the sun rose towards the south, proclaiming the approach of noon, the agitation of Simon increased. He sat in a corner of the prison, and strove to pray; and, as the footsteps of the sentinels

quickened, he groaned in the bitterness of his spirit. At length the loud booming of the gong announced that the dial plate upon the turret marked the hour of twelve. Simon clasped his hands together. "Maister! maister!" he cried, "our hour is come, an' one word from yer lips could save us baith, an' ye winna speak it. The very holding oot o' yer hand could do it, but ye are stubborn even unto death."

"Simon," said the laird, "I hae left it as an injunction upon my mother that yer wife an' weans be provided for—she will fulfil my request. Therefore, be ye content. Die like a man, an' dinna disgrace both yourself an' me."

"O sir! I winna disgrace, or in ony manner dishonour ye," said Simon—"only I do not see the smallest necessity for us to die, and especially when both our lives could be saved by yer doing yourself a good turn."

While he spoke, the sound of the sentinels' footsteps pacing to and fro, ceased. The prison-door was opened; Simon fell upon his knees—the laird looked towards the intruder proudly.

"Your lives are spared for another day," said a voice, "that the laird o' Harden may have time to reflect upon the proposal that has been made to him. But let him not hope that he will find mercy upon other terms; or that, refusing them for another day, his life will be prolonged."

The door was again closed, and the bolts were drawn. The spirit of Sir Gideon was too proud and impatient to spare the lives of his prisoners for four days as he had promised to his daughter to do, and he now resolved that they should die upon the following day.

The sun had again set, and the dim lamp shed around its fitful and shadowy light upon the table of the prison-room, when the maiden, who had carried the letter to the laird's mother, again entered.

"This is kind, very kind, gentle maiden," said he; "would that I could reward ye! An' hoo fares it with my puir mother?—what answer does she send?"

"An' oh, ma'am, or mistress!" cried Simon, hoo fares it wi' my dear wife an' bairns? I hope ye told them all that I desired ye to say. Hoo did she bear the news o' being made a widow? An' what did she say to my injunction, that she was never to marry again?"

"Ye talk wildly, man," said the maiden, addressing

Simon: "it wasna in my power to carry yer commands to yer wife; but I trust it will be longer than ye expect before she will be a widow, or hae it in her power to marry again?"

"O ye angel! ye perfect picture!" cried Simon, "what is that which I hear ye say? Do you really mean to tell me that I stand a chance o' being saved, an' that I shall see my wife an' bairns again?"

"Even so," said she; "but whether you do or do not, rests with yer master."

"Speak not o' that, sweet maiden," said the laird; "but tell me, what says my mother? Hoo does she bear the fate o' her son; an hoo does she promise to avenge my death?"

"She is as one whose heart-strings are torn asunder," was the reply, "an' who refuses to be comforted; but she wud rather hae another dochter than lose an only son; an' her prayer is, that ye will live and mak her happy, by marrying the maiden ye despise."

"What!" he cried, "has even my mother so far forgot herself, as to desire me to marry the dochter o' oor enemy whom no other man could be found to take? It shall never be. I wud obey her in onything but that."

"But," said the maiden, "I still think ye are wrong to reject an' despise puir Meg before that ye hae seen her. She may baith be better an' look better than ye are aware o'. There are as guid as Scott o' Harden who hae said, that were it in their power they wud mak her their wife; an' ye should remember, sir, that it will be as pleasant for you to hear the blithe laverock singing owre yer head, as for another person to hear the wind soughing and the long grass rustling owre yer grave. Ye hae another day to live, an' see her, an' speak to her, before ye decide rashly. Yours is a cruel doom, but Sir Gideon is a wrathfu' man; an' even for his ain flesh an' bluid he has but sma' compassion when his anger is provoked. Death, too, is an awful thing to think aboot; an', therefore, for yer ain sake, an' for the sake o' yer puir distressed mother an' sisters, dinna come to a rash determination."

"Sweet lass," replied he, "I respect the sympathy which ye evince; but never shall Sir Gideon Murray say that, in order to save my life, he terrified me into a marriage wi' his daughter. An' when my puir mother's grief has subsided, she will think differently o' my decision."

"Weel, sir," said the maiden, "since ye will not listen to my advice—an' I own that I hae nae richt to offer it—I will send ane to ye whose persuasion will hae mair avail."

"Whom will ye send?" inquired the laird; "it isna possible that ye can hae been playing me false?"

"No," she replied, "that isna possible; an' from her that I will send to you, ye will see whether or not I hae kept my word, guid an' truly, to fulfil yer message."

So saying, she withdrew, leaving him much wondering at her words, and yet more at the interest which she took in his fate. But she had not long withdrawn when the prison-door was again opened, and Lady Scott rushed into the arms of her son.

"My mother!" cried he, starting back in astonishment—"my mother!—hoo is this?"

"Oh, joy and gladness, an' every blessing be upon my honoured lady! for noo I may stand some chance o' walkin' back upon my ain feet to see my family. Oh! yer leddyship," Simon added, "join yer prayers to my prayers, an' try if ye can persuade my maister to marry Sir Gideon's dochter, an' thereby save his ain life and mine."

But she fell upon the neck of her son, and seemed not to hear the words which Simon addressed to her.

"O my son! my son!" she cried; "since there is no other way by which yer life can be ransomed, yield to the demand o' the fierce Murray. Marry his daughter an' live—save yer wretched mother's life; for yer death, Willie, wud be mine also!"

"Mother!" answered he vehemently, "I will never accept life upon such terms. I am in Murray's hands, but the day may come—yea, see ye that it does come—when he shall fall into the hands o' the Scotts o' Harden; an' see ye that ye do to him as he shall have done to me. But, tell me, mother, hoo are ye here? Wherefore did ye venture, or how got ye permission to see me? Ken ye not that if he found ye in his power, upon yer life also he wud fix a ransom?"

"The kind lassie," she replied, "that brought the letter from ye, at my request conducted me here, and contrived to get me permission to see ye; an' she says that my visit shall not come to the knowledge o' Sir Gideon. But, O Willie! as ye love an' respect the mother that bore ye, an'

that nursed ye nicht an' day at her bosom, dinna throw awa yer life when it is in yer power to save it, but marry Miss Murray, an' ye may live, an so may I, to see many happy days; for, from a' that I hae heard, though not weel-favoured, she is a young lady o' an excellent disposition!"

"Oh! that's richt, my leddy," interrupted Simon; "urge him to marry her, for it would be a dreadfu' thing for him an' I to be gibbetted, as a pair o' perpetual spectacles for the Murrays to mak a jest o'. Ye ken if he does marry, an' if he finds he doesna like her, he can leave her; or he needna live wi' her; or perhaps she may soon die; an' ye will certainly agree that marriage, ony way ye tak it, is to be desired, a thousand times owre, before a violent death. Therefore, urge him again, yer leddyship, for he may listen to what ye say, though he despises my words, an' will not hearken to my advice."

"Simon," said the laird, "never shall a Murray hae it in his power to boast that he struck terror into the breast o' a Scott o' Harden. My determination is fixed as fate. I shall welcome my doom, an' meet it as a man. Come, dear mother," he added, "weep not, nor cause me to appear in the presence o' my enemies with a blanched cheek. Hasten to avenge my death, an' think that in yer revenge yer son lives again. Come, though I die, there will be moonlight again."

She hung upon his breast and wept, but he turned away his head and refused to listen to her entreaties. The young maiden again entered the prison, and said—

"Ye must part noo, for in a few minutes Sir Gideon will be astir, an' should he find yer leddyship here, or discover that I hae brought ye, I wud hae sma' power to gie ye protection."

"Fareweel, dear mother!—fareweel!" exclaimed the youth grasping her hand.

"O Willie! Willie!" she cried, "did I bear ye to see ye come to an end like this! Bairn! bairn! live—for yer mother's sake live!"

"Fareweel, mother!—fareweel!" he again cried, and the sentinel conducted her from the apartment.

It again drew towards noon. The loud gong again sounded and Simon sank upon his knees in despair, as the voice of the

warder was heard crying—"It is the hour! prepare the prisoners for execution!"

Again the prison-door was opened, and Sir Gideon, with wrath upon his brow, stood before them.

"Weel, youngster," said he, addressing the laird, "yer hour is come. What is yer choice—a wife or the wuddy?"

"Lead me to execution, ye auld knave," answered the laird scornfully, "an' ken, that wi' the hemp around my neck, in contempt o' you an' yours, I will spit upon the ground where ye tread."

"Here, guards!" cried Sir Gideon; "lead forth William Scott o' Harden to execution. Strap him upon the nearest tree, an' there let him hang until the bauldest Scott upon the Borders dare to cut him down. As for you," added he, addressing Simon, "I seek not your life; depart, ye are free; but, beware hoo ye again fall into the hands o' Gideon Murray."

"No, sir!" exclaimed Simon, "though I am free to acknowledge that I hae nae ambition to die before it is the wise will and purpose o' nature, yet I winna, I canna, leave my dear young maister; an' if he be to suffer, I will share his fate. Only, Sir Gideon, there is ae thing I hae to say, an' that is, that he is young, an' he is proud an' stubborn like yersel', an' though he will not, o' his ain free will an' accord, nor in obedience to yer commandments, marry yer dochter—is it not possible to compel him whether he will or no, an' so save his life as it were, in spite o' him?"

"Away with both!" cried the knight, striking his ironed heel upon the ground, and leaving the apartment.

"Then if it is to be, it must be," said Simon, folding his arms in resignation, "an' there is no help for it! But, oh maister! maister! ye hae acted foolishly."

They were led from the prison-house, and through the court-yard, towards a tall elm-tree, round which all the retainers of Sir Gideon were assembled to witness the execution; and the old knight took his place upon an elevated seat in the midst of them.

The executioners were preparing to perform their office, when Agnes or Muckle-mouthed Meg, as she was called, came forth, with a deep veil thrown over her face, and sinking on her knee before the old knight, said imploringly—"A boon. dear faither—yer dochter begs a simple boon."

"Ye tak an ill season to ask it, Meg," said the knight angrily; "but what may it be?"

She whispered to him earnestly for a few minutes, during which his countenance exhibited indignation and surprise: and when she had finished speaking, she again knelt before him and embraced his knees.

"Rise, Meg, rise!" said he impatiently, "for yer sake, an' at yer request, he shall hae another chance to live." And approaching the prisoner, he added—"William Scott, ye hae chosen death in preference to the hand o' my dochter. Will ye noo prefer to die rather than marry the lassie that ran wi' the letter to yer mother, an' without my consent brought her to see ye?"

"Had another asked me the question," said the laird, "though I ken not who she is, yet she has a kind heart, and I should hae said 'No,' an' offered her my hand, heart, and fortune; but to you, Sir Gideon, I only say—do your worst."

"Then Willie, my ain Willie!" cried his mother, who at that moment rushed forward, "another does request ye to marry her, an' that is yer ain mother!"

"An'," said Agnes, stepping forward, and throwing aside the veil that covered her face, "puir Meg, ower whom ye gied a preference to the gallows, also requests ye!"

"What!" exclaimed the young laird, grasping her hand, "is the kind lassie that has striven night and day to save me—the very Meg that I hae been treating wi' disdain?"

"In troth am I," she replied, "an' do ye prefer the wuddy still?"

"No," answered he; and turning to Sir Gideon, he added, —"Sir, I am now willing that this ceremony end in matrimony."

"Be it so," said the old knight, and the spectators burst into a shout.

The day that began with preparations for death, ended in a joyful bridal. The honour of knighthood was afterwards conferred upon the laird; and Meg bore unto him many sons and daughters, and was, as the reader will be ready to believe, one of the best wives in Scotland; while Simon declared that he never saw a better-looking woman in Ettrick Forest, his own wife and daughters not excepted.

WILLIE WASTLE'S ACCOUNT OF HIS WIFE.

"Sic a wife as Willie had!
I wadna gie a button for her."—*Burns.**

"IT was a very cruel dune thing in my neebor, Robert Burns, to mak a sang about my wife and me," said Mr. William Wastle, as he sat with a friend over a jug of reeking toddy, in a tavern near the Bridge-end, in Dumfries, where he had been attending the cattle market; "I didna think it was neebor-like," he added; "indeed it was a rank libel upon baith her and me; and I took it the worse, inasmuch as I always had a very high respect for Maister Burns. Though he said that I 'dwalt on Tweed,' and that I 'was a wabster,' yet everybody kenned wha the song was aimed at. Neither did my wife merit the description that has been drawn o' her; for, though she was nae beauty, and hadna a face like a wax-doll, yet there were thousands o' waur-looking women to be

* Mr. Allan Cunningham, in his Life of Burns, states the following particulars respecting Willie's wife:—viz., that "He was a farmer, who lived near Burns, at Ellisland. She was a very singular woman—tea, she said, would be the ruin of the nation; sugar was a sore evil; wheaten bread was only fit for babes; earthenware was a pick-pocket; wooden floors were but fit for thrashing upon; slated roofs, cold; feathers good enough for fowls. In short, she abhorred change, and whenever anything new appeared—such as harrows with iron teeth—'Ay! ay!' she would exclaim, 'ye'll see the upshot!' Of all modern things she disliked china most—she called it 'burnt clay,' and said 'it was only fit for haudin' the broo o' stinkin' weeds,' as she called tea. On one occasion, an English dealer in cups and sau-

met wi' than my Kirsty; and to say that her mither was a 'tinkler,' was very unjustifiable, for her parents were as decent and respectable people, in their sphere o' life, as ye would hae found in a' Nithsdale. Her faither had a small farm which joined on with one that I took a lease o', when I was about one-and-twenty. Kirsty was about three years aulder, and though not a bonny woman, she was in many respects, as ye shall hear in the course o' my story, a very extraordinary one. I was in the habit o' seeing her every day, and as I sometimes was working in a field next to her, I had every opportunity o' observing her industry, and that, frae mornin' till nicht, she was aye aydent. This gave me a far higher opinion o' her than if I had seen her gaun aboot wi' a buskit head; and often at meal-times, I used to stand and speak to her owre the dyke. But, after we had been acquainted in this manner for some months, when the cheerfu' summer weather came in, and the grass by the dyke-sides was warm and green, and the bonny gowans blossomed amang it, I louped owre the dyke, and we sat doun and took our dinners together. I couldna have believed it possible that a bit bear bannock and a drap skim milk wad gang doun sae deliciously, but never before had I partaken o' onything that was sae pleasant to the palate. One day I was quite surprised when I found that my arm had slipped unconsciously round her waist, and drawing her closer to my side, I sighed, and said —'O Kirsty, woman!'

"She pulled away my hand from her waist, and looking me in the face, said—'Weel, Willie, man, what is't?'

"'Kirsty,' said I, 'I like ye.'

"'I thocht as meikle,' quoth she, 'but could ye no hae said sae at ance?'

cers asked so much for his wares, that he exasperated a peasant, who said, 'I canna purchase, but I ken ane that will. Gang there,' said he, pointing to the house of Willie's wife, 'dinna be blate,' or burd-moothed; ask a guid penny—she has the siller!' Away went the poor dealer, spread out his wares before her, and summed up all by asking a double price. A blow from her crummock was his instant reward, which not only fell on his person, but damaged his china. 'I'll learn ye,' quoth she, as she heard the saucers jingle, 'to come wi' yer brazent English face, and yer bits o' burnt clay to me!' She was an unlovely dame—her daughters, however, were beautiful."

"'Perhaps I could, dear,' said I; 'but ye ken true love is aye blate; however, if ye hae nae objections, I'll gang yont, after fothering time the nicht, and speak to yer faither and mither, and if they hae nae objections, and ye have yer providin' ready, wi' yer guid-will and consent, I shall gie up oor names and we shall be cried on Sabbath first.'

"'Oh,' said she, 'I haena lived for five-and-twenty years without expectin' to get a guidman some day; and I hae had my providin' ready since I was eighteen, an' a' o' my ain spinnin' an' bleachin', an' the lint bocht wi' what I had wrocht for; so that I am behauden to naebody. My faither and mither have mair sense than to cast ony obstacle in the way o' my weelfare; and as ye are far frae bein' disagreeable to me, if we are to be married, it may as weel be sune as syne, and we may be cried on Sunday if ye think proper.'

"'O Kirsty, woman!' cried I, and I drew my arm round her waist again, 'ye hae made me as happy as a prince! I hardly ken which end o' me is upmost!'

"'Na, Willie,' said she, 'there is nae necessity for ony nonsensical raptures; ye ken perfectly weel that yer head is upmost, though I hae heard my faither talk about some idiots that he ca's philosophers, who say that the world whirls roond aboot like a cart-wheel on an axletree, and that ance in every twenty-four hours our feet are upmost, and our head downmost; but it will be lang or onybody get me to believe in sic balderdash! As to yer being happy at present, it shall be nae faut o' mine if ye are not aye sae; and if ye aye be as I would wish ye to be, ye will never be unhappy.'

"Such, as near as I can recollect, is not only the history, but the exact words o' oor courtship. Her faither and mither gied their consent without the slightest hesitation. I remember her faither's words to me were—'Weel, William, frae a' that I hae seen o' ye, ye appear to be a very steady and industrious young man, and ane that is likely to do weel in the world. I hae seen, also, wi' great satisfaction, that ye are very regular in yer attendance upon the ordinances; there hasna been a Sabbath, since ye cam to be oor neebor, that I hae missed ye oot o' yer seat in the kirk. Frae a' that I hae heard concernin' ye also, ye hae always been a serious, sober, and weel behaved young man. These things are a great satis-

faction to a faither, when he finds them in the lad that his dochter wishes to marry. Ye hae my consent to tak Kirsty; and, though I say it, I believe ye will find her to mak as industrious, carefu' and kind a wife, as ye would hae found if ye had sought through a' broad Scotland for ane. I will say it, however, and before her face, that there are some things in which she takes it o' her mother, and in which she will hae her ain way. But this is her only fault. I'm sure ye'll ne'er hae cause to complain o' her wasting a bawbee, or o' her allooing even the heel o' a kebbuck to gang to unuse. It is needless for me to say mair; but ye hae my free and full consent to marry when ye like.'

"Then up spoke the auld guidwife, and said—'Weel, Willie, lad, if you and Kirsty hae made up yer minds to mak a bargain o' it, I am as little disposed to oppose yer inclinations as her faither is. A guid wife, I sincerely believe, ye will find her prove to ye; and though her faither says that in some things she will be like me, and have her ain way, let me tell ye, lad, that it's owre often necessary for a woman to do, wha is striving everything in her power for the guid o' her husband and the family, and sees him, just through foolishness as it were, striving against her. Ye are strange beings, you men folk, to deal wi'. But ye winna find her a bare bride, for she has a kist fu' o' linen o' her ain spinnin', that may serve ye a' yer days, and even when ye are dead, though ye should live for sixty years.'

"I thought it rather untimeous that the auld woman should hae spoken about linen for our grave-claes, before we were married; and I suppose my countenance had hinted as much, for Kirsty seemed to hae observed it, and she said—'My mother says what is and ought to be. It is aye best to be provided for whatever may come; and as Death often gives nae warning, I wadna like to be met wi' it, and to hae naething in the house to lay me out in like a Christian.'

"I thought there was a vast deal o' sense aad discretion in what she said, and though I didna like the idea o' such a premature providing o' winding sheets, yet after she spoke, I highly approved o' her prudence and forethought.

"It was on a Monday afternoon, about three weeks after the time I have been speaking o', that Kirsty, wi' her faither, and mother, and another young lass, an acquaintance o' hers,

that was to be best maid, cam yont to my house for her and me to be married. I had sent for ane o' my brothers to be best-man, and he was with me waiting when they came. She was not in the least discomposed, but behaved very modestly. In a few minutes the minister arrived, when the ceremony immediately began, and within a quarter of an hour she was mine, and I was hers, for the term o' our natural lives.

"From the time that I took the farm, I had had no kind o' dishes in the house, save a wooden bowie or twa, four trenchers, three piggins, and twa bits o' tin cans, that I had bought from a travelling tinker for twopence a piece, and which Kirsty afterwards told me, were each a halfpenny a-piece aboon their value. I dinna think that I had tasted tea aboon a dozen times in the whole course o' my life; but as it was coming into general use, I thought it would look respectfu' to my bride, before her faither and mother, if I should hae tea upon our marriage day, and I could ask the minister to stop and tak a dish wi' us. I thought it would gie a character o' respectability to oor wedding. Therefore, on the day afore the marriage, I went into Dumfries, and bought half a dozen o' bonny blue cups and saucers. I never durst tell Kirsty how meikle I gied for them. It was with great difficulty that I got them carried hame without breaking. I also bought two ounces o' the best tea, and a whole pound o' brown sugar.

"I had a servant lassie at the time, the dochter o' a hind in the neighbourhood; she was necessary to me to do the work about the house, and to milk twa kye that I kept, to mak the cheese, and a part o' the day to help the workers out wi' the bondage.

"'Lassie,' said I, when I got hame, 'do ye ken hoo to mak tea?"

"'I'm no very sure,' said she; 'but I think I do. I ance got a cup when I wasna weel, frae the farmer's wife that my faither lives wi'. I'll try.'

"'Here, then,' says I; 'tak care o' thir, and see that ye dinna break them, or it will mak a breaking that ye wouldna like in your quarter's wages.' So I gied her the cups and saucers to put awa carefully into the press.

"'O maister,' says she; 'but noo, when I recollect, ye'll

need a tea-kettle, and a tea-pat, and a cream-pat, and tea-spoons.'

"'Preserve me!' quoth I, 'the lassie is surely wrang in the head! Hoo many articles o' *tea* and *cream* hae ye there? The parritch kettle will do as weel as a tea-kettle—where can be the difference? Your tea-pats I ken naething aboot, and as for a cream-pat, set down the cream-bowie; and as for spoons, ye fool, they dinna sip tea—they drink it—just sirple it, as it were, out o' the saucer.'

"'O sir,' said she; 'but they need a little spoon to stir it round to mak the sugar melt—and that is weel-minded, ye'll also require a sugar basin.'

"'Hoots! toots! lassie,' cried I, 'do ye intend to ruin me? By yer account o' the matter, it would be almost as expensive to set up a tea equipage, as a chariot equipage. No, no; just do as the miller's wife o' Newmills did.'

"'And what way micht that be, sir?' inquired she.

"'Why,' said I, 'she took such as she had, and she never wanted! Just ye tak such as ye have—cogie, bowie, or tinniken, never ye mind—show ye your dexterity.'

"'Very weel, sir,' said she; 'I'll do the best I can.'

"But, just to exemplify another trait in my wife's character, I will tell ye the upshot o' my cups and saucers. I confess that I was in a state o' very considerable perturbation; not only on account o' what the lassie had told me about the want o' a tea-kettle, tea-pat, and so forth, but also that, including the minister, there were seven o' us, while I had but six cups, and I consoled mysel' by thinking that, as Kirsty and I were now *one*, she might drink oot o' the cup and I would take the saucer, so that a cup and saucer would serve us baith, and I was trusting to the ingenuity o' the lassie to find substitutes for the other deficiencies, when she came ben to where we were sitting, and going forward to Kirsty, says she—'Mistress, I have had the twa ounces o' tea on boiling in a chappin o' water, for the last twa hoors—do ye think it will be what is *masked* noo?'

"'Tea!' said my new-made wife, wi' a look o' astonishment, 'is the lassie talking aboot *tea!* While I am to be in this house—and I suppose that it is to be for my life—there shall nae poisonous foreign weed be used in it, nor come within the door, unless it be some drug that a doctor orders.

Take it off the fire, and throw the broo awa. My certes! if young folk like us were to begin wi' sic extravagance, where would be the upshot? Na, na, Willie,' said she, turning round to me, 'let us begin precisely as we mean to end. At all events, let us rather begin meanly, than end beggarly. I hae seen some folk, no aboon oor condition in life, mak a great dash on their wedding day; and some o' them even hire gigs and coaches, forsooth, to tak a jaunt awa for a dozen o' miles! Poor things! it was the first and last time that ony o' them was either in gig or coach. But there shall be nae extravagance o' that kind for me. My faither and mother care naething about tea, for they hae never been used to it, and I'm sure that our friends here care as little; and, asking the minister's pardon, I am perfectly sure and certain, that tea can be nae treat to him, for he has it every day, and it will be standing ready for him when he gangs hame. The supper will be ready by eight o'clock, and those who wish it, may tak a glass o' speerits in the meantime—as it isna every day that they are at my wedding.'

"Her faither and mother looked remarkable proud and weel pleased like at what she said, just as if they wished to say to me—'There's a wife for ye!' But I thought the minister seemed a good deal surprised, and in a few minutes he took up his hat, wished us much joy, and went away. For my part, I didna think sae much aboot my bride's lecture, as I rejoiced that she thereby released me from the confusion I should have experienced in exposing the poverty o' my tea equipage.

"It was on the very morning after oor marriage, and just as I was gaun out to my wark—'Willie,' says she, 'I think we should single the turnips in the field west o' the house the day. The cotters' twa bondage lasses and me will be able to manage it by the morn's nicht.'

"'O my dear,' quoth I, 'but I hae nae intention that ye should gang out into the fields to work, noo that ye are my wife. Let the servant lass gang out, and ye can look after the meat.'

"'Her! the idle taupie!' said she, 'we hae nae mair need for her than a cart has for a third wheel. Mony a time it has grieved me to observe her motions, when ye were out o' the

way—and there would she and the other twa wenches been standing, clashing for an hour at a time, and no workin' a stroke. I often had it in my mind to tell ye, but only I thought ye might think it forward in me, as I perceived ye had a kindness for me. But I can baith do all that is to do in-doors, and work out-by also, and at the end o' the quarter she shall leave.'

"'Wi' a' my heart,' says I, 'if ye wish it;' for it struck me she micht be a wee thocht jealous o' the lassie; 'but there is no the sma'est necessity for you working out in the fields; for though she leaves, we can get a callant at threepence a-day, that would just do as meikle out-work as she does, and ye would hae naething to attend to but the affairs o' the house.'

"'O William!' replied she, 'I'm surprised to hear ye speak. Ye talk o' threepence a day just as if it were naething. Hoo many starving families are there, that threepence a day would mak happy? It is my maxim never to spend a penny unless it be laid out to the greatest possible advantage. Ye should always keep that in view, every time ye put your hand in your pocket. He that saves a penny, has as mony thanks in the lang run, as he that gies it awa. Threepence a day, not including the Sabbath, is eighteenpence a week; noo, you are a scholar, only think how much that comes to in a twelvemonth. There are fifty-twa weeks in the year—that is fifty-twa shillings; and fifty-twa sixpences, is—how much?'

"'Twenty-six shillings, my dear,' said I, for I was quite amused at her calculation—the thing had never struck me before.

"'Weel,' added she, 'fifty-two shillings and twenty-six shillings, put that together and see how much it comes to.'

"'Oh,' says I, after half a minute's calculation, 'it will just be three pounds, eighteen shillings, to a farthing.'

"'Noo,' cried she, 'only think o' that!—three pounds, eighteen shillings a year; and ye would throw it away, just as if it were three puffs o' breath! Now, William, just listen to me and tak tent:—that is within twa shillings o' four pounds. It would far mair than cleed you and me, out and out, frae head to foot, from year's end to year's end. But at present, the wench's meat and wages come to three times that, and there-

fore I am resolved, William, that while I am able to work, we shall neither throw away the one nor the other. It is best that we should understand each other in time; therefore, I just tell ye plainly, as I said yesterday, that as I wish to end, I mean to begin. This very day, this very morning and hour I go out wi' the bondage lassies to single the turnips; and at the end o' the quarter, the lazy taupie butt-a-house maun walk aboot her business.'

"'Weel, Kirsty, my darling,' says I, 'your way be it. Only I maun again say, that I had no wish or inclination whatever to see ye toiling and thinning turnips beneath a burning sun, or maybe taking them up and shawing them, when the cauld drift was cutting owre the face keener than a razor.'

"'Weel, William,' quoth she, 'it is needless saying any more words about it—it is my fixed and determined resolution.'

"'Then, hinny,' says I, 'if ye be absolutely resolved upon that, it is o' no manner o' use to say ony mair upon the subject, of course—your way be it.'

"So the servant lassie was discharged accordingly, and Kirsty did everything hersel'. Wet day and dry day, whatever kind o' wark was to be done, there was she in the middle o' it, by her example spurring on the bondagers. Even when we began to hae a family, I hae seen her working in the fields wi' an infant on her back; and I am certain that for a dozen o' harvests, while she was aye at the head o' the shearers, there was aye our bairn that was youngest at the time, lying rowed up in a blanket at the foot o' the rig, and playing wi' the stubble to amuse itsel'.

"There was many that said that I was entirely under her thumb, and that she had the maister-skep owre me. But that was a grand mistake, for she by no means exercised ony thing like mastership owre me; though I am free to confess, that I at all times paid a great degree o' deference to her opinions, and that she had a very particular and powerful way o' enforcing them. Yet, although I was in no way cowed by her, there wasna a bairn that we had, frae the auldest to the youngest, that durst play *cheep* before her. She certainly had her family under great subjection, and their bringing up did her great credit. They were allowed time to play like ither bairns—but from the time that they were able to make use o' their hands, ye would hardly hae

found it possible to come in upon us, and seen ane o' them idle. All were busy wi' something; and no ane o' them durst hae stepped owre a pin lying on the floor, without stooping doun to tak it up, or passed onything out o' its place without putting it right. For I will say for her again, that, if my Kirsty wasna a bonny wife, she was not only a thrifty but a tidy ane, and keepit every ane and every thing tidy around her.

"She was a strange woman for abhorring everything that was new-fangled. She was a most devout believer in, and worshipper o' the wisdom o' our ancestors. She perfectly hated everything like change; and as to onything that implied speculation, ye micht as weel hae spoken o' profanation in her presence. She said she liked auld friends, auld customs, auld fashions; and was the sworn enemy o' a' the innovations on the practices and habits that had been handed doun frae generation to generation. I dinna ken if ever she heard the names Whig or Tory in her life; but if Tory mean an enemy o' change, then my Kirsty certainly was a Tory o' the very purest water.

"I dinna suppose that she believed there was such a word as *improvement* in the whole Dictionary. She would hae allooed everything to stand steadfast as Lot's wife, for ever and for ever. But, however, just to gie ye a specimen or twa o' her remarkable disposition:—I think it was about sixteen years after we were married that I took a tack o' an adjoining farm which was much larger than the ane we occupied. I was conscious it would require every penny we had scraped thegither, and that we had saved, to stock it. My wife was by no means favourable to my taking it. She said we kenned what we had done, but we didna ken what we might do; and it was better to go on as we were doing, than to risk oor a'. I acknowledged that there was a vast deal o' truth in what she said; but, however, I saw that the farm was an excellent bargain, and I was resolved to tak it, say what she might; and, therefore, though she was said to domineer over me, yet, just to prove to every person round about, that I was not under a wife's government, I did tak it. I had not had it twa years, when I began to find that thrashing wi' the flail would never answer. Often, when the markets were on the rise, and when I could hae turned owre many pounds into my ain

pocket, I found it was a' thegither impossible for me to get my corn thrashed in time to catch the markets while they were high; and I am certain that, in the second year that I had the new farm, I lost at least a hundred pounds frae that cause alone—that is, I didna get a hundred pounds that I micht hae got, and that was much the same as losing it oot o' my pocket. Thrashing machines at that period was just beginning to come into vogue, but there was a terrible outcry against them; and mony a ane said that they were an invention o' the Prince o' Darkness; for my part I wish he would never do mair ill upon the earth than invent such things as thrashing machines. Hooever, I saw plain and clearly the advantage that the machine had owre the flail, and I was determined to hae ane. But never did I see a woman in such a steer as the mention o' the thing put Kirsty in! She went perfectly wild aboot it.

"'What, William!' she cried, 'what do ye talk aboot? Losh me, man, have ye nae mair sense?—have ye nae discretion whatever? Will ye really rush upon ruin at a horse-race? Ye talk aboot getting a machine! How, I ask ye, how do ye expect that ever ye could prosper for a single day after, if ye were to throw oor twa decent barn-men oot o' employment, and their families oot o' bread? I just ask ye that question, William. Doesna the proverb say—'Live and let live;' and hoo are men to live, if by an invention o' the Enemy o' mankind, ye tak work oot o' their hands and bread oot o' their mouths?'

"'Dear me, Kirsty,' said I, 'hoo is it possible that a woman o' your excellent sense can talk such nonsense? Ye see very weel that, if I had had a machine I micht hae made a hundred pounds mair than I did by last year's crops—that, certainly, would have been a good turn to us—and, tak my word for it, it is neither in the power nor in the nature o' the Evil One to do a guid turn to onybody.'

"'Willie,' quoth she, 'ye talk like a silly man—like a very silly man, indeed. If the Enemy o' mankind hadna it in his power to do for us what we tak to be for oor guid, hoo in the warld do ye think he could tempt us to our hurt? I say that thrashing-machines are an invention o' his, and that they are ane o' the instruments he is bringing up for the ruin o' this country. It is him, and him alone, that is putting it into

your head to buy ane o' his infernal devices, in order that he may not only ruin you, baith soul and body, by filling ye wi' a desire o' riches, an' making ye the oppressor and the robber o' the poor, but that, through your oppression and robbery, he may ruin them also, and bring them to shame or the gallows!'

"'Forgie me, Kirsty,' said I, 'what in a' the world do ye mean? Hoo is it possible that ye can talk aboot me as likely to be either an oppressor or a robber o' the poor? I'll declare that there was never a beggar passed either me or my door, that ever I saw, but I gied him something. I'm sure, guid-wife, ye baith ken better o' me, and think better o' me than to talk sae.'

"'Yes, William,' said she, 'I did think better o' ye; but I noo see distinctly that the Enemy is leading ye blindfolded to your ruin. First, through the pride o' yer heart, he tempted ye to tak this big farm, that, as ye thocht, ye might hasten to be rich; and now he is seducing ye to buy ane o' his diabolical machines for the same end, and in order that ye may not only deprive honest men and their families o' bread, but, belike, rather than starve, tempt them to steal! And what ca' ye that but oppressing and robbing the poor. Hooever, buy a machine!—buy ane, and ye'll see what will be the upshot! If ye dinna repent it, say I'm no your wife.'

"I confess her words were onything but agreeable to me, and they rather set me a hesitating hoo to act. Hooever my mind was bent upon buying the machine. I had said to several o' my neebors that I intended to hae ane put up; and I was convinced that, if I drew back o' my word, it would be said that my wife wouldna let me get it, and I would be made a general laughing-stock—and that was a thing that I held in greater dread than even my wife's lectures, severe as they sometimes were; therefore, reason or nane, I got a machine put up. It caused a very general outcry amongst a' the 'datal' men and their wives for miles round. At ae time I even thocht that they would mob me and pull it to pieces. But all their clamour was a mere snaw-flake falling in the sea, compared wi' the perpetual dirdum that Kirsty rang in my ears aboot it. She actually threatened that judgments would follow, and I dinna ken a' what. But, on the morning o' the

day that I yoked the horses into it, and began to thrash wi' it for the first time, I declare to you that she took the six bairns wi' her, and absolutely went to her faither's, vowing to work for them until the blood sprang from her finger-ends, rather than live wi' a man that would be guilty o' such madness and iniquity.

"But having heard before dinner-time that I had had to employ a woman at sixpence a-day to feed into the machine, she came back as fast as her feet could carry her, wi' a' the bairns behint her, and, ordering the stranger away, began to feed the machine hersel', and the bairns carried her the sheaves.

"I saw that out o' a spirit o' pure wickedness she was distressing hersel' far beyond what there was the sma'est occasion for. It was as clear as day that indignation was working in her heart, like barm fermenting in a bottle, and just about half an hour before we were to leave off thrashing for the nicht, she was seized with a very alarming pain in her breast. I saw and said it was a hysterical affection, and was altogether the consequence o' the passion that she had given way to on account o' the unlucky machine. She, however, denied that there were such diseases in existence as either hysterical or nervous affections. They were sham disorders, she said, that cam into the country wi' tea and spirit-drinking; and she assuredly was free from indulging in either the ane or the other. But she grew worse and worse, and was at last obliged to sit down upon some straw on the barn floor. I ventured forward to her and said—'Kirsty, woman, ye had better gang awa into the house. Ye will do yersel mair ill by sitting there, for there is a current o' air through the loft, which, after you being warm with working, may gie ye your death o' cauld. Rise up, dear, and gang awa into the house, and try if a glass o' usquebae will do ye ony guid.'

"Maister Burns, the poet, has said—

'She has an ee, she has but *ane*;'

but, certes, had he seen the look that she gied me as I then spoke to her, he would hae been satisfied that she had *twa!* I saw it was o' nae manner o' use for me either to offer advice or express sympathy. The wife o' an auld man that

was called John Neilson, and who for several years had been our barn-man, came into the machine loft at the time, and wi' a great deal o' concern she asked my wife what was like the matter wi' her. Now this auld Peggy Neilson had the reputation for miles round, o' being an extraordinary skilly woman. There wasna a bairn in the parish took a sair throat, or got a burned foot, or a cut finger, or took a *dwam* for a day or twa, but its mother said—'I maun hae Peggy Neilson spoken to about that bairn, before it be owre late.' Kirsty, therefore, told her hoo she was affected, when the other, wi' the confidence o' a doctor o' medicine brought up at the first college in the kingdom, said—'Then, ma'am, if that be the way ye feel, there is naething in the warld sae guid for ye as a blast o' the pipe. I aye carry a tinder box and flint and steel wi' me, and ye are welcome to a whuff o' my cutty.'

"Now, Kirsty was a bitter enemy to baith smoking and snuffing in general; but she had great faith in the skill o' Peggy Neilson, and wad far rather hae done whatever she advised, than followed the prescription o' the best doctor in a' the land. She took the auld woman's pipe, therefore, and began to blaw through a spirit o' pain and perverseness at the same moment. As I anticipated, it soon made her dizzy in the head, and she had to be led to the house. Hooever, in a short time the pain that she had been suffering, was greatly abated, though whether the smoking contributed towards removing it or not, I dinna pretend to say. Just as she had been ta'en to the house, we were done thrashing for the day, and I was very highly gratified wi' the day's wark.

"But I was very tired, and as soon as I had had my sowens I went to bed. I several times thought, and remarked it, that there was a sort o' burnt smell about.

"'Ay,' said Kirsty, who by this time was a great deal better, 'they who will use the engines o' forbidden agents maun expect to smell them, as in the end they will feel them.'

"Being conscious it was o' nae use to reason wi' her, for she in general had the better o' me in an argument, I tried to compose mysel' to sleep. But it was in vain to think o' closing my een, for the smell o' burning grew stronger and stronger, and I was rising again, saying—'There is some-

thing burning aboot somewhere, and I canna rest until I hae seen what it is.'

"'Nor let ither folk rest either,' said Kirsty.

"Just at that moment, oor eldest dochter, who was as perfect a picture o' beauty as ever man looked upon wi' eyes o' admiration, and who being alarmed by the smell, as well as me, had gane oot to examine from what it proceeded, came running oot o' breath, crying—'Faither! faither!—the barn and everything is on fire!'

"'O goodness!' cried I, as I threw on part o' my claes in the twinkling o' an ee; 'what wretch can hae been sae wicked as to do it?'

"'It's a judgment upon ye,' said Kirsty, 'for having such a thing about the place, after a' the admonitions ye had against it. I said ye would see what would be the upshot, and it hasna been lang o' coming.'

"'O ye tormentor o' my life!' cried I, as I ran oot o' the house; 'it's your handy-work!'

"'Mine!' exclaimed she. 'O ye heartless man that ye are, how dare ye presume either to say or think sic a thing!' and followed me out.

"The whole stackyard was black wi' smoke—it was hardly possible to breathe—and a great sheet o' fire, like the mouth o' a fiery dragon, was rushing and roaring out at the barn-door. I didna ken what to do; I was ready to rush head foremost into the middle o' the flames, as if that I could hae crushed them out wi' the weight o' my body; and I am persuaded that I would hae darted right into the machine loft, where the flames were bursting through the very tiles, as frae the mouth o' a volcano, had not my wife, and our eldest daughter Janet, flown after me, and held me in their arms, the one crying—'Be calm, William—do naething rashly—let us see to save what can be saved;' and the other saying—'Faither! faither! dinna risk your life.'

"Now, there was a hard frost owre the entire face o' the ground, and there wasna a drop o' water to be got within a quarter o' a mile; and the whole o' my year's crop, with the exception o' what had that day been thrashed, was in the stackyard. I shouted at the pitch o' my voice for assistance, but the devouring flames soon roared louder than I did. Kirsty, wi' her usual presence o' mind, began to clear away the

straw from around the barn, to prevent the fire from spreading, and she called upon the bairns and me to follow her example. She also ordered a laddie to set the horses out o' the stables, and the nowt oot o' the 'courtine,' and drive them into a field where they would be oot o' danger. A' our neighbours round aboot, in a short time arrived to our assistance; but a' our combined efforts were unavailing. The wood wark o' the machine was already on fire—the barn roof fell in, and up flew such a volley o' smoke and firmament o' fire, as man had never witnessed. The sparks ascended in millions upon millions; and as they poured down again like a shower o' fire, every stack that I had broke into a blaze, and the whole produce o' my farm, corn, straw, and hay became as a burning fiery furnace. It became impossible for ony living thing to remain in the stackyard. From end to end, and round and round, it was one fierce and awful flame. The heat was scorching, and the dense smoke was baith blinding and suffocating. Every person was obliged to flee from it. The very cattle in the field ran about in confusion, and moaned wi' terror, and the horses neighed wi' fright, and pranced to and fro. I stood at a distance, as motionless as a dead man, gazing wi' horror upon the terrific scene o' desolation, beholding the destruction o' my property—the burning up, as I may say, o' a' my prospects. The teeth in my head chattered thegither, and every joint in my body seemed oot o' its socket; and the raging o' destruction in the stackyard was naething to the raging o' misery in my breast; and especially because I couldna banish frae my brain the awfu' thought that the hand o' the wife o' my bosom had lighted the conflagration. While I was standing in this state o' speechless agony, and some round about me were pitying me, while others said—'He had nae business to get a thrashing machine, and the thing wouldna hae happened,' Kirsty came forward to me and takin' me by the hand, said—'William, dinna be silly—appear like a man before folk. Our loss is nae doubt great, but in time we may get owre it; and be thankfu' that it is nae waur than it is like to be—for your wife and bairns are spared to ye, and we have escaped unscaithed.'

"'Awa, ye descendant o' Judas Iscariot!' cried I; 'dinna speak to me!'

"'William,' said she, calmly, 'what infatuation possesses ye, man?—dinna mak' a fool o' yoursel'.'

"'Awa wi' ye!' cried I, perfectly shaking wi' rage.

"'Dear me!' I heard a neighbour remark to another; 'how gruffly he speaks to Kirsty! I aye thought that she had the upperhand o' him, but it doesna appear by his manner o' speaking to her.'

"Distracted, wretched, and angry as I was, I experienced a sort o' secret pleasure at hearing the observation. I had shown them that I wasna a slave tied to my wife's apron-strings, as they supposed me to be. Kirsty left me wi' a look that had baith scorn and pity in it. But oor auldest lassie, my bonny fair-haired Janet, to look upon whose face I always delighted beyond everything on earth—came running forward to me, and throwing her arms about my neck, sobbed wi' her face upon my breast, and softly whispered—'Dinna stand that way, faither, a'body is looking at ye; and dinna speak harshly to my poor mother—she is distressed enough without your being angry wi' her.' I bent my head upon my bairn's shouther, and the tears ran down my cheeks.

"By this time everything was oot o' the house; and the fire was prevented frae reaching it, chiefly through the daring exertions o' a hafflins laddie, whose name was James Patrick, who was the son o' a neebor farmer, and who, though no aboon seventeen years o' age, I observed was very fond o' oor bonny Janet; for I had often observed the young creatures wandering in the loaning thegither: and when ye mentioned the name o' the ane before the other, the blood rose to their face.

"Next morning, the stackyard, barn, byres, and stables, presented a fearful picture o' devastation. There was naething to be seen but the still smoking heaps o' burnt straw and roofless buildings, wi' wreck and ruin to the richt hand and to the left. Some thought that the calamity would knock me aff my feet, and cause me to become a broken man—and I thought myself that that would be its effect. But Kirsty was determined that we should never sink while we had a finger to wag to keep us aboon the water. Cheap as she had always maintained the house, she now keepit it at almost no expense whatever. For more than two years, nothing was allowed to come into it but what the farm produced, and what we had within ourselves, neither in meat nor in claething.

"But though I witnessed all her exertions, nothing could satisfy my mind that she was not the cause o' the destruction o' the machine, and through it o' all that was in and about the stack yard. The idea haunted me perpetually, and rendered me miserable, and I could not look upon my wife without saying to mysel'—'Is it possible that she could hae been guilty o' such folly and great wickedness?' I was the more confirmed in my suspicion, because she never again mentioned the subject o' the machine in my hearing, neither would she allow it to be spoken aboot by ony ane else.

"What gratified me maist, during the years that we had to undergo privation, was the cheerfulness wi' which all the bairns submitted to it; and I couldna deny that it was solely to her excellent manner o' bringing them up. Our Janet, who was approaching what may be called womanhood, was now talked o' through the hale countryside for her beauty and sweet temper; and it pleased me to observe that, during our misfortune, the attentions o' James Patrick (through whose skilful exertions oor house was saved frae the conflagration) increased. It was admitted, on all hands, that a more winsome couple was never seen in Nithsdale.

"Oor auldest son David, who was only fifteen months younger than his sister, had also grown to be o' great assistance to me. Before he was seventeen, he was capable o' man's work, which enabled me to do wi' a hind less than I had formerly employed. My landlord also was very considerate; and the first year after the burning, he gave me back the half o' the rent, which I, with great difficulty, had been able to scrape thegither. But when I went hame, and in the gladness o' my heart, began to count down the money upon the table before Kirsty and the bairns, and to tell them how good the laird had been—'Tak' it up, William!' cried she, 'tak it up, and gang back wi' it—he would count it an obligation a' the days o' our lives. I will be beholden to neither laird nor lord! nor shall ony ane belonging to me—sae tak back the money, for it isna ours!'

"'Bless me,' thought I, 'but this is something very remarkable! This is certainly another proof that she really is at the bottom o' the fire-raising. It is the consciousness o' her guilt that makes her shudder at and refuse the kindness o' the laird.'

"'It is braw talking, Kirsty,' said I; 'but I see nae necessity

for persons that hae been visited wi' a misfortune such as we met wi', and wha hae suffered sae much on account o' it, to let their pride do them an injury or exceed their discretion. Consider that we hae a rising family to provide for.'

"'Consider what ye like,' quoth she, 'but, if ye accept the siller, consider what will be the upshot. Ye would hae to be hat in hand to him at all times and on all occasions. Yer very bairns would be, as it were, his bought slaves. No, William, tak back the money—I order ye!'

"'Ye *order* me!' cried I, 'there's a guid ane!—and where got ye authority to order me? If ye will hae the siller taen back, tak it back yersel'.'

"Without saying another word, she absolutely whipped it of the table, every plack and bawbee, into her apron; and, throwing on her rockelay and hood, set aff to the laird's wi' it, where, as I was afterwards given to understand, she threw it down upon his table wi' as little ceremony as she had sweepit it aff mine.

"Ye may weel imagine that baith my astonishment and vexation were very considerable. I had seen a good deal o' Kirsty, but the act o' taking back the siller crowned a'!

"'Losh,' said I, in the pure bitterness o' my spirit, 'that caps a'!—that is even worse than destroying the machine, wi' the stacks and stabling into the bargain!'

"'What do ye mean about destroying the machine, faither?' inquired Janet and David, almost at the same instant—'who do ye say destroyed it?'

"'Naebody,' said I, angrily, 'naebody!' for I found I had said what I ought not to hae said.

"'Really, faither,' said Janet, 'whatever it may be that ye think and hint at, I am certain that ye do my mother a great injustice if ye harbour a single thought to her prejudice. It may appear rather proud-spirited her takin' back the siller, though I hae nae doubt, in the lang run, but we'll a' approve o' it.'

"'That is exactly what I think too,' said David.

"'Oh, nae dout!' said I, 'nae dout o' that!—for she has ye sae learned, that everything she does, or that ony o' ye does, is always right; and whatever I do must be wrang!' and I went out o' the house in a pet, driving the door behind me, and thinking about the machine and the loss o' the siller.

"Hooever, I am happy to say, that although Kirsty did tak back the money to the laird, and leave it wi' him, yet, as I have already hinted to ye, through her frugal management, within a few years we got the better o' the burning. But there is a saying, that some folk are no sooner weel than they are ill again—and I'm sure I may say that at that time. I no sooner got the better o' ae calamity, until another owretook me. Ye hae heard what a terrible dirdum the erecting o' toll-bars caused throughout the country, and upon the Borders in particular. Kirsty was one of those who cried oot most bitterly against them. She threatened that if it were attempted to place ane within ten miles o' oor farm, she would tear it to pieces with her ain hands.

"'Here's a bonny time o' day, indeed!' said she, 'that a body canna gang for a cart-load o' coals or peats, or tak their corn, or whatever it may be, to the market, but they must pay whatever a set o' Justices o' the Peace please to charge them for the liberty o' driving alang the road. Na, na! the roads did our faithers before us and they will do for us. They went alang them free and without payment, and so will we; for I defy ony man to claim what has been a public road for ages, as his property. Only submit to such an imposition, and see what will be the upshot. But rather than they shall mak sic things in this neighbourhood, I will raise the whole countryside.'

"Unfortunately in this, as in everything else, she verified her words. A toll-bar was erected within half-a-mile o' oor door. Kirsty was clean mad about it. She threatened not only to break the yett to pieces, but to hang the toll-keeper over the yett-post, if he offered resistance. I thought o' my machine, and said little; and the more especially, because every ane, baith auld and young, and through the whole country, so far as I could hear, were o' the same sentiments as Kirsty. There never was onything proposed in this kingdom that was mair unpopular. And I am free to confess, that, with regard to the injustice o' toll-bars, I was precisely o' the same way o' thinking as my wife—only I by no means wished to carry things to the extremes that she wished to bring them to.

"I ought to tell ye that our laird was more than suspected o' being the principal cause o' us having a toll-bar placed so near us, so that we could neither go to lime, coals, nor market,

without gaun through it. I was, therefore, almost glad that my wife had taken back the siller to him, lest—as I was against raising a disturbance about the matter—folk should say, that my hands and tongue were tied wi' the siller which he had given me back; for, if I didna wish to be considered the slave o' my wife, as little did I desire to be thought the tool o' my landlord. But, ae day, I had been in at Dumfries, in the month o' July, selling my wool; I had met wi' an excellent market, and a wool-buyer from Leeds and I got very hearty thegether. He had bought from me before; and, on that day, he bought all that I had. I knew him to be an excellent man, though a keen Yorkshireman, and, ye ken, that the Yorkshire folk and we Scotchmen are a gay tight match for ane anither—though I believe, after a', they rather beat us at keeping the grip o' the siller; but, as I intended to say, I treated him, and he treated me, and a very agreeable day we had. I recollect when he was pressing me to hae the other gill, I sang him a bit hamely sang o' my ain composing. Ye shall hear it—

Nay, dinna press, I winna stay,
For drink shall ne'er abuse me;
It's time to rise and gang away—
Sae neibors ye'll excuse me.

It's true I like a social gill,
A friendly crack wi' cronies;
But I like my wifie better still,
Our Jennies and our Johnnies.
There's something by my ain fireside—
A saft, a haly sweetness;
I see, wi' mair than kingly pride,
My hearth a heaven o' neatness.

Though whisky may gie care the fling,
It's triumph's unco noisy;
A jiffy it may pleasure bring,
But comfort it destroys aye.
But I can view my ain fireside
Wi' a' a faither's rapture—
Wee Jenny's hand in mine will slide,
While Davy reads his chapter.

I like your company an' your crack,
But there's ane I loo dearer,
And wha will sit till I come back,
Wi' ne'er a ane to cheer her.

A waff o' joy comes owre her face,
The moment that she hears me;
The supper—a' things in its place,
An' wi' her smile she cheers me.

"However, I declare to you, it was very near ten o'clock before I left the house we are sitting in at present, and put my foot in the stirrup. But my friend Robin says—

'Weel mounted on my grey meer Meg,'

I feared for naething; and, though I had sixteen lang Scots miles to ride, I thought naething about it; for, as he says again—

'Kings may be great, but I was glorious,
Owre a' the ills o' life victorious!'

But, just as I had reached within about half a mile o' the toll bar that had been erected near my farm, I saw a sort o' light rising frae the ground, and reflected on the sky. My heart sank within me in an instant. I remembered the last time I had seen such a light. I thought o' my burning stackyard, o' my ruined machine, and o' Kirsty! My first impulse was to gallop forward, but a thousand thoughts, a thousand fears came owre me in an instant; and I thought that evil tidings come quick enough o' their ain accord, without galloping to meet them. As I approached the toll-bar, the flame and the reflection grew brighter and brighter; and I heard the sound o' human voices, in loud and discordant clamour. My forebodings told me, to use Kirsty's words, what would be the upshot. I hadna reached within a hundred yards o' the bar, when, aboon a' the shouting and the uproar, I heard her voice, the voice o' my ain wife, crying—'Mak him promise that it shall ne'er be put up again—mak him swear to it—or let his yett gang the gaet o' the toll-yett!'

"In a moment all that I had dreaded I found to be true. At the sound o' her voice, hounding on the enraged multitude, (though I dinna altogether disapprove o' what they were doing), I plunged my spurs into my horse, and galloped into the middle o' the outrageous crowd, crying—'Kirsty! I say, Kirsty! awa hame wi' ye! What right or what authority had ye to be there?'

"'Hear him! hear him!" cried the crowd, 'Willie has turned a toll bar man, and a laird man, because the laird once offered him the half o' his rent back again! Never mind him, Kirsty—we'll stand yer friends!'

"'I thank ye, neighbours,' said she, 'but I require naebody to stand as friends between my guidman and me. I ken it is my duty to obey him, that is, when he is himsel', and comes hame at a reasonable time o' nicht: but not when he is in a way that he doesna ken what he's saying, as he is the nicht.'

"'Weel done, Mistress Wastle!' cried a dozen o' them, 'we see ye hae the whip-hand o' him yet!'

"'The mischief tak ye!' cried I, 'for a wheen ill-mannered scoundrels; but I'll let every mother's son and dochter among ye ken whase hand the whip is in!'

"'And wi' that, I began to lay about me on every side; but, before I had brought the whip half-a-dozen o' times round my head, I found that the horse was out from under me; and there was I, wi' my back upon the ground, while, on the one side, was a heavy foot upon my breast, and on the other Kirsty threatening ony ane that would injure a hair o' her husband's head; and my son David and James Patrick rushing forward, seized the man by the throat that had his foot upon my breast, and in an instant, they had him lying where I had lain; for they were stout powerfu' lads.

"But when I got upon my feet, and began to recover from the surprise that I had met wi', there did I see the laird himsel, standing trembling like an ash leaf in the middle o' the unruly mob—and, as ringleader o' the whole, my wife Kirsty shaking her hand in his face, and endeavouring to extort from him a promise, that there never should be another toll-bar erected on his grounds, while he was laird.

"'Kirsty!' I exclaimed, 'what are ye after? Are ye mad?'

"'No, William!' cried she, 'I am not mad, but I am standing out for our rights against injustice; and sorry am I to perceive that at a time when everybody is crying out, and raising their hand against the oppression that is attempted to be practised upon them, my guidman should be the only coward in the countryside.'

"'William Wastle!' said the terrified laird, whom some o' them were handling very roughly (and principally, I must confess, at the instigation o' Kirsty), 'I'm glad to see that I

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have one tenant upon my estate who is a true man; and I ask your protection.'

"'Such protection as I can afford, sir,' said I, 'ye shall have; but, after the rough handling which I have experienced this very moment, I doubt it is not much that is in my power to afford ye.'

"'Get your faither awa to his bed, bairns!' cried my wife, as I was driving my way through the crowd to the assistance o' the laird; and I'll declare, if my son David, and James Patrick, didna actually come behind me, and lifting me aff my feet, carried me shouther-high a' the way to my bedroom; and, in spite o' my threats, expostulations, and commands, locked me into it.

"'Weel,' thought I, as I threw myself down upon the bed without taking aff my claes (partly because I found my head wanted ballast to tak them aff), I said unto mysel'—'This comes o' having a wise and headstrong wife, and bairns o' her way o' bringing up. But if ever I marry again and hae a family, I shall ken better how to act.'

"Notwithstanding all that I had undergone and witnessed, in the space o' ten minutes I fell fast asleep; and the first thing that I awoke to recollect—that is, to be conscious o'—was my daughter Janet rushing to my bedside, and crying, —'Faither! faither! my mother is a prisoner!—my poor, dear mother, and James Patrick, also!—and I heard the laird saying that they would baith be transported, as the very least that could happen them for last night's work, which I understand will be punished more severely than even high-way robbery!'

"I awoke like a man born to a consciousness o' horror, and o' naething but horror. All that I had seen and heard, and encountered on the night before, was just as a dream to me, but a dismal dream I trow.

"'Where is yer mother?' I gasped, 'or what is it that ye are saying, hinny? and—where is James Patrick?'

"'Oh!' cried my darling daughter, 'before this time they are baith in Dumfries jail, for pulling down and burning the toll-yetts, and threatening the life o' the laird. But everybody says it will gang particularly hard against my mother and poor James; for, though every one was to blame, they were what they ca' ringleaders.'

"I soon recollected enough o' the previous night's proceedings to comprehend what my daughter said. I hurried on my claes, and awa I flew to Dumfries. But I ought to tell ye, that the laird's servants had ridden in every direction for assistance; and having got three or four constables, and about a dozen o' the regular military, all armed wi' swords and pistols, they made poor Kirsty and James Patrick, wi about a dozen others, prisoners, and conveyed them to Dumfries jail.

"When I was shown into the prison, Kirsty and James, and the whole o' them, were together. 'O Kirsty, woman!' said I, in great distress, 'could ye no hae keepit at hame while my back was turned? Why hae ye brought the like o' this upon us? I'm sure ye kenned better! *Was the destruction o' the machine and the stackyard no a warning to ye?*'

"'William,' answered she, 'what is it that ye mean?—is this a time to cast upon me yer low-minded suspicions? Had ye last nicht acted as a man, we micht hae got the laird to comply wi' our request; but it is through you, and such as you, that everything in this unlucky country is gaun to destruction, and sorry am I to say that ill o' ye—for a kind, a good, and a faithfu' husband hae ye been to me, William.'

"'O sir!' said James Patrick, coming forward and taking me by the hand, 'may I just beg that ye will tak my respects to yer dochter Janet; and, I hope that whatever may be the issue o' this awkward affair, that she will in no way look down upon me, because I happen to be as a sort o' prisoner in a jail.' My heart rose to my mouth, and I hadna a word to say to either my wife or him.

"'Weel,' said I, as I left them, 'I must do the best I can to bring baith o' ye aff; and, to accomplish it, the best lawyers in a' Scotland shall be employed.'

"But to go on—at a very great expense, I and the faither o' James Patrick had employed the very principal advocates that went upon the Dumfries circuit; and they tauld us that we had naething to fear, and that we might keep ourselves quite at ease.

"I was glad that my son David hadna been seized and imprisoned, as weel as his mother and James Patrick, for he also had been ane o' the ringleaders in the breaking doon and burning o' the toll-bars, and in the assault upon the laird.

But he escaped apprehension at the time, and I suppose they thought that they had enough in custody to answer the ends o' justice and the law, and, therefore, he was permitted to remain unmolested.

"Now, sir, comes the most melancholy part o' my story. I had a quantity o' wool to deliver to the Yorkshire buyer, I hae already mentioned, upon a certain day. My son David was to drive the carts wi' it to Annan. It was sair wark, and he had but little sleep for a fortnight thegether. It caused him to travel night and day, load after load. Now, I needna tell ye, that at that period the roads were literally bottomless. The horse just went plunge, plunging, and the cart jerking now to ae side and now to another, or giein a shake sufficient to drive the life oot o' ony body that was in it. Now, the one wheel was on a hill, and the other in a hollow; or, again, baith were up to the axletree in mud, or the horse half swimming in water! And yet people cried out against toll-bars! But, as I hae been telling ye, my son David had driven wool to Annan for a fortnight, and he was sair worn out. The roads were in a dreadful state—worse than if, now-a-days, ye were to attempt to drive through a bog.

"Ae night, when he was expected hame, his sister Janet and mysel' sat lang up waiting upon him, and wondering what could be keeping him, when a stranger rode up to the door and asked if 'one Mr. William Wastle lived there?' I replied 'Yes!' And, oh! what think ye were his tidings, but that my name had been seen upon the carts, that the horses had stuck fast in the roads, and that my son David, who had fallen from the shafts, had either been killed, or drowned among the horses' feet!

"I thought his brothers and sisters, and especially Janet, would have gone oot o' their judgment. As for me, a' the trials I had had were but as a drap in the bucket when compared wi' this!

"But, after I had mourned for a night, the worst was to come. Hoo was I to tell his poor imprisoned mother!—imprisoned as she was for opposing the very thing that would hae saved her son's life!

"Next day I went to Dumfries; but I declare that I never saw the light o' the sun hae sic a dismal appearance. The

fields appeared to me as if I saw them through a mist. Even distance wasna as it used to be. I was admitted into the prison, but I winna—oh no! I canna repeat to ye the manner in which I communicated the tidings to his mother! It was too much for her then—it would be the same for me now! for naething in the whole coorse o' my life ever shook me so much as the death o' my poor David. But I remember o' saying to her, and I declare to ye upon the word o' a man, unthinkingly—'O Kirsty, woman! had we had toll-bars, David might still hae been living!'

"'William! William!' she cried, and fell upon my neck, 'will ye kill me outright?' And for the first time in my life, I saw the tears gushing down her cheeks. Those tears washed away the very remembrance o' the machine, and the burning o' the stacks. I pressed her to my heart, and my tears mingled wi' hers.

"I believe it was partly through our laird, that baith Kirsty and James Patrick were liberated without being brought to a trial. Her imprisonment and the death o' our son, had wrought a great change upon my wife: and I think it was hardly three months after her being set at liberty, that we were baith sent for to auld John Neilson the barnman's, whose wife Peggy lay upon her death-bed. When we approached her bed-side, she raised herself upon her elbow, and said—'The burning o' yer barn and stackyard has always been a mystery—hear the real truth from the words o' a dying and guilty woman. Yer machine had thrown my husband out o' employment, and when yer wife there guid me back the pipe, a whuff o' which I said would do her good, *I let the burning dottle drap among the straw*—nane o' ye observed it—ye were a' leaving the barn. Now, ye ken the cause—on my death-bed I make the confession."

"I declare I thought my heart would hae louped out o' my body. I pressed my wife, against whom I had harboured such vile suspicions, to my breast. She saw my meaning—she read my feelings.

"'William,' said she, kindly, 'if ye hae onything on yer mind that ye wish to forget, so hae I; let us baith forget and forgie!'

"I felt Kirsty's bosom heaving upon mine, and I was happy.

"Within six months after this, James Patrick and our dochter Janet were married; and an' enviable couple they then were, and such they are unto this day. And, as for my Kirsty, auld though she is, and though the sang says—

'I widna gie a button for her,

auld, I say, as she is, and wi a' her faults, I would gie a' the buttons upon my coat for her still, and a' the siller that ever was in my pouch into the bargain."

POLWARTH ON THE GREEN.

PERADVENTURE there are few of our readers who have not heard of "Polwarth on the Green," and the "Polwarth Thorn." The song bearing the former title is certainly founded upon one of the most popular traditions on the Borders. Since the commencement of this publication, we have been many times requested to write a tale upon the subject, and not less than thrice from different quarters within the last seven days; and, as we are at all times anxious to meet the wishes of our readers, we shall now endeavour to fulfil the request which has been made to us.

There are none to whom the traditions of other days are not interesting. They save from oblivion the memory, the deeds, and the manners of our fathers. No nation is so sunk in barbarity as to disregard them: the civilized European, and the Indian savage, alike cherish them; and the poets of every land have wed them with song. Yet nowhere are traditions more general or more interesting than upon the Borders. Every grey ruin has its tale of wonder and of war. The solitary cairn on the hillside, speaks of one who died for religion, or for liberty, or belike for both. The very schoolboy passes it with reverence, and can tell the history of him whose memory it perpetuates. The hill on which it stands, is a monument of daring deeds, where the sword was raised against oppression and where heroes sleep. Every castle hath its legends, its tales of terror and of blood, "of goblin, ghost, or fairy." The mountain glen, too, hath its records of love and war—there history has let fall its romantic fragments, and the hills enclose them. The forest trees whisper of the past; and, beneath the shadow of their branches, the silent spirit of other years seems

to sleep. The ancient cottage, also, hath its traditions, and recounts

"The short and simple annals of the poor."

Every family hath its legends, which record to posterity the actions of their ancestors, when the sword was law, and even the payment of rent upon the Borders was a thing which no man understood; but, as Sir Walter Scott saith, "all that the landlord could gain from those residing upon his estate, was their personal service in battle, their assistance in labouring the land retained in his natural possession, some petty quit-rents of a nature resembling the feudal casualties, and perhaps a share in the spoil which they acquired by ràpine." Many of those traditions are calculated to melt the maiden's heart, to fill age with enthusiasm, and youth with love of country.—But to our story.

In the year 1470, John Sinclair of Herdmanstone, in East Lothian, who was also Lord of Kimmerghame and Polwarth, dying without male issue, the estate of Kimmerghame descended to his daughter Marion, and that of Polwarth to her sister Margaret. His heir-male was his brother, Sir William Sinclair, to whom the estate of Herdmanstone fell. Sir William, as the uncle of the co-heiresses, though not appointed as their guardian by their father, for they were both well-nigh of woman's estate when he died, craftily took upon himself that duty. He whispered to them that their estates were not managed as they ought to be—that their bondmen did not perform the duty required of them—that those they had set over their estates as stewards, did not render them a faithful account of their stewardship. He insinuated a thousand suspicions into their young minds, until their affairs gradually fell into his hands, and he at length succeeded in gaining the entire management of their estates; and he now required only to have the disposal of their personal freedom. Men of power in those days were not very scrupulous as to the means which they employed to obtain their object; he who had a score of retainers, weighed the scales of life and death in his hands. Nevertheless, aware of the rank which his nieces held in the estimation of his

country, Sir William knew that it would not be safe to venture upon making them prisoners by open violence. He, therefore, courteously invited them to his house at Herdmanstone, where he stated that the gayest and proudest company in broad Scotland would be present to delight them. Marion, who was fond of amusement, was overjoyed at the invitation; but her sister Margaret, who was of a graver disposition, said—

"Well, sister, I like not our uncle's kindness—something sinful seems to laugh in his looks; the very movement of his lips bespeaks more than it reveals; confide in *me*, dear sister, and distrust *him*. When I was but a child, playing round our mother's knee, I have heard her say unto my father—'Ah, John! I like not your brother; there is a cunning in his looks, in his very words; he cannot meet you with the straightforward gaze of an honest man; and me thinks he looks upon me as though he distrusted and hated me; yea, I have often thought as though he were plotting evil against me.' So our mother was wont to say; and our father would reply—'Dear Elizabeth, think not so cruelly of one who is so near and dear to me; trust me, that he loves you and yours.' 'It may be so,' she would reply, 'but there is that in his manner which I cannot overcome.' Then our father would remain silent for a time, and add—'Well, there is a want of frankness in Sir William which becomes not a brother.'"

"Lull your suspicions, my demure sister," the light-hearted Marion replied; "a thousand times have I heard him say that no one but the boldest baron in all Scotland should wed his niece, Marion."

"And he said truly," replied Margaret; "for if he have us once within his power, not even the boldest knight in Scotland will be able to receive our hands, unless he sue for it with gallant bowmen at his back, and the unsheathed sword to enforce his suit."

"Oh, then, sister," subjoined Marion, "I suppose you have a knight at hand who would delight in such handy-work; for is not Sir Patrick Hume of Wedderburn reputed to be the most valorous knight upon the Borders, and withal the humble worshipper of fair Margaret Sinclair of Polwarth."

And as the maiden spoke she laughed, and tapped her sister good-naturedly upon the cheek. Margaret blushed, and playfully replied—"Well, sister, is there no valorous knight at Wedderburn but Sir Patrick? What think ye of George Hume?"

"No more of this," cried Marion; "let us accept our uncle's invitation, and mingle with the gay company he has invited to meet us."

"If you will have it so, let it be so," replied Margaret; "but trust me, I fear that good will not come of it."

On the following day they set out upon their journey towards Herdmanstone, accompanied with only two men-servants. Their uncle received them with a show of cordial friendship; but the guests whom they expected to meet, they saw not, and they had been but a few minutes beneath his roof, when they found themselves prisoners, secured by gratings, bolts, and bars. On discovering the situation into which they had been entrapped, Marion wept aloud, and accused herself of being the unwitting author of her sister's captivity.

"Fear not," said Margaret; "our uncle is a stern man, he is a man of blood, but there are as strong hands as his, that will be raised to deliver the sisters of Kimmerghame and Polwarth, when their captivity becomes known."

"But how will it be known?" asked Marion; "for who knows that we are here?"

"Let us trust to Him who is the orphan's father," replied her sister, "and leave all to His good providence."

"Amen," said the other; but she sobbed bitterly as she spoke.

On the second day of their imprisonment, their uncle entered the apartment where they were confined.

"Weel, maidens," said he sternly, "how like ye your abode at Herdmanstone? I have observed the slightfu' een with which baith o' you have looked upon your uncle, and now that ye are in my power, ye shall repent the airs o' disdain that ye hae taken upon you. It becomes nae the blood o' Polwarths to assume a superiority over the house o' Sinclair. So choose ye—there are twa cousins who are not very auld, but they're growing; ye shall hae yer choice to marry them, or the deepest dungeon in Herdmanstone shall be your

doom. Your destiny is placed in your own hands—decide it as you will; but remember that it is a Sinclair that never broke his word, that wags the finger o' fate over your heads. Eight days! eight days! remember!" he repeated, and left them.

"Now, you will despise me, Margaret," said Marion, "for my maiden ambition has led us into this trouble; yet will I rather be an inmate in our uncle's dungeon, than be the wife of the boy-husband he would assign me. Sister, will you not upbraid me?"

"Upbraid you!" said the calm and gentle Margaret, "stern as is our uncle, deadly as is his wrath, I fear him not. The other day you spoke to me jeeringly of Sir Patrick Hume—in the same strain I answered you respecting his brother George. Eight days will not pass until Sir Patrick miss me from Polwarth, and powerful as my uncle may be, bold and desperate he is, I know that one stone of Herdmanstone Castle will not be left standing upon another till we are freed."

"You have a brave heart, sister," said Marion, "but it is small comfort to me, who must look upon myself as the author of this disaster. And how think ye that Sir Patrick or his brother George (if ye will speak o' him) are to hear of our confinement? Wot ye not, that they know not where we are; or, if they should know, they will not apprehend that evil could befal us in the house of our relative?"

"I believe, Marion," answered Margaret, "that within the eight days which our uncle has named, we shall either be at liberty, or have ceased to live. It is our lives that he seeks, not that we should be the wives of his sons; rather than be so wed, I will die—so will you. But, if we should die, our deaths would not be unavenged. He would neither enjoy our estates, nor the triumph of his guilt. Ye have heard the names of Patrick and George Hume of Wedderburn spoken of as sounds of terror upon the Borders—their swords have avenged the injured, and released the captive. Marion! they will avenge our wrongs—dear sister, be not afraid."

It was about daybreak on the fourth day after their imprisonment, that a musician, who played upon the Union or

Northumbrian pipe of those days, approached beneath the window of their apartment, and softly playing an air accompanied it with his voice, as follows :—

"My heart is divided between them,
I dinna ken which I wad hae ;
Right willing my heart I wad gie them—
But how can I gie it to twae ?
There's Meggy, a fairer or better
I'm certain there couldna weel be .
Dumfounder'd the first time I met her
What was sweet Marion to me .

"Yet Marion is gentle and bonny,
I liked her ere Meggy I saw,
And they say it is sinfu' for ony
Man upon earth to like twa.
My heart it is rugg'd and tormented,
I'd live wi' or die for them baith ;
I've done what I've often repented,
To baith I have plighted my faith.

"And oft when I'm walking with Meggy,
I'll say 'Dear Marion,' and start ;
While fearfu' she'll say, 'Weel, I ken ye
Hae ithers mair dear to your heart.'
Was ever a man sae confounded ?
I dinna ken what will be dune,
Baith sides o' my bosom are wounded,
And they'll be the death o' me sune."

"Hark !" said Marion, as she listened to the strain of the minstrel ; "it is the song of the Egyptian thief, Johnny Faa. Mind ye since he sang it beneath our window at Kimmerghame ?"

"I remember it weel," replied Margaret ; "but dinna call him thief, sister ; for, be Johnny a king or no a king, he is one that King James is glad to lift his bonnet to ; and I am sure that he means weel to us at present. Wheesht ye, Marion, and I will whisper to him a low chaunt over the window." And in a low voice, she sung—

"Oh, saw ye my laddie comin', Johnny ?
Oh, saw ye my laddie comin' ?
If ye've no seen him, tell him frae me,
That I'm a wofu' woman.

We here are sisters twa, Johnny,
Confined within this tower;
And ilka time the sun gaes down
It points to our death hour."

"I heard it rumoured, gentle maiden," said the gipsy, gazing eagerly towards the window from whence they looked, "that no good was intended ye in this place; and though it be not in the power of Johnny Faa to bring to ye the assistance of his own men, yet it strikes me there is *ane*, if no *twa*, maidens, that I could bring to your rescue, and that wad make a clap o' thunder ring through the deepest cell in Herdmanstone."

"Thank ye, Johnny," replied Margaret; "ye're kind—ye're very kind; and if ye wad carry a bit scrap o' paper to Wedderburn Castle, greatly would ye aid a distressed damsel."

"I thank ye, my doo, for relying on the word and promise o' John, king and lord o' little Egypt. Little do they ken me, and less is their knowledge o' our race, who think that we would look upon those who are wronged without seeing them righted. How I heard of your imprisonment, or the wrong intended ye, never fash your thumb; though a bird waffed it in my lugs wi' its wings, though it chirped it in them as it chirmed past me, it is enough that I ken of your wrongs, and that I will assist ye. Trust me, maidens."

"I will trust ye," answered Margaret.

"Dinna trust him, sister," said Marion; "he may be some spy of our uncle's."

"Of being a spy," cried the other, "I dinna believe him capable. Stop, Johnny, or king, or whatever ye be," she added, "and I will throw ye a word or two to carry to Sir Patrick Hume of Wedderburn."

She addressed to him a few words, and threw the paper which contained them into the hands of the gipsy.

"Bless ye for your confidence, my bonny lassie!" said Johnny Faa; "and before the sun gae down, Sir Patrick Hume shall ken that there is ane that likes him pining in a captive's prison, wi' none but ane that his brother likes to bear her company."

The gipsy king was mounted on an active pony, and al-

though it was without a saddle, and reined only by a hempen bridle, he dashed off with it, at the pace of a fleet racer, and directed his course towards the Lammermoors.

It was not noon when he arrived at the Castle of Wedderburn. The porter at the gate retreated in terror as he beheld him, for the name of the Faa king had become terrible on the Borders, and even the king had been glad to grant him terms on his own choosing. On being admitted to the presence of the knight—"What is it, ye vagrant loon," asked Sir Patrick, "that brings ye to venture within the roof o' honest men?"

"Honest!" said the gipsy—"ha! ha! ha! I daresay your honesty and mine is muckle about a par. Between us two it is, take who can. Ye hae the bit land, Sir Patrick, but ye havena a stronger or a more cunning hand, nor yet a sharper sword than the lord o' little Egypt. Therefore, speak at evens with me, lest ye rue it."

"And wherefore should I speak at evens," answered Hume, with the like o' you, who are at best but the king o' gaburlunzie men."

"The mischief light on ye!" said the gipsy; "ye have provoked me sair, and I have tholed wi' your slights and taunting; but try me not wi' another word, lest ye rue it, Sir Patrick Hume, and your brother rue it, and every Hume o' the house o' Wedderburn shall be brought to cry dool, for refusing to listen to the words o' Johnny Faa."

"And what wad ye say if ye had your will, ye braggart knave?" cried the knight.

"Merely," retorted the gipsy, "that there is a bonnie lassie, ane who is owre guid to be the bride o' sic uncivil an individual as yoursel', now lying in durance, wi' death or perpetual imprisonment before her, while ye havena the courage to lift your hand to her rescue."

"Of whom speak ye?" vociferated the laird of Wedderburn.

"Who," rejoined the gipsy, slily, "is nearest to your heart?—who nearest to your door? Have you seen her within these four days?"

"What!" exclaimed Sir Patrick, "speak ye of my Margaret?"

Independent of the immediate retainers of Sir William Sinclair, however, his neighbours came to his aid, and, although they were, at first, as two to one, the conflict had not lasted long when the Humes became the weaker party. The battle raged keenly—swords were broken in the grasp of their owners—the strong war-horse kicked upon the ground, in the agony of death, indenting the earth with its hoofs as it died, leaving the impression of its agony—their wounded men grappled with, and reviled each other, as though they had been foreigners or aliens—spears were broken, and shields clanked against each other—while the war-shout and the dying groan mingled together. Victory seemed still to be doubtful; for though the Humes fought bravely, and their leaders led them on as with the heroism of despair, yet every minute the numbers of their adversaries increased, while theirs, if the expression might be used, became fewer and more few.

Yet there were two spectators of the conflict who beheld it with feelings that may not, that cannot be described. Now the one beheld the plume which she had adorned for her betrothed husband, severed by the sword of an enemy; while the other saw the gay jerkin, which she had weaved for hers, tarnished with blood. They perceived, also, what we might term the ebbing and the flowing of the deadly feud—the retreating and the driving back; and they were spectators also of the wounded, the dying, and the dead. They saw the party, in whom their hopes were fixed, gradually overpowered—they beheld them fall back beneath the swords of their opponents, disputing inch by inch as they retired, and their hearts fell within them. When hope, fear, and anxiety were wrought to their highest point of endurance, and the party in whom their trust lay seemed to be vanquished, and were driven back, at that period, Johnny Faa and a number of his followers rushed to their succour

"Hurra!" exclaimed the wanderer, "for the braw lasses o Polwarth and Kimmerghame! Fight, ye Humes! fight! There is a prize before ye worthy a clour on the crown, or even a stab through the brisket."

The approach of the Faa king turned the tide of victory, and his followers shouted—"The bonny lasses o' Polwarth and Kimmerghame shall be free!"

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"For ever, ay, and a day after it," cried Sir William, "shall the man inherit a cow's mailing, and a cow to boot, upon the lands o' Herdmanstone, who this day brings me upon his sword, the head o' one o' the birkies o' Wedderburn." Sir William, however, became a suppliant for mercy beneath the red sword of Patrick Hume; and his life being granted, the Sinclairs gave their arms into the hands of their opponents. The young brothers each rushed into the house, to the rescue of the captive damsels; and Margaret and Marion each fell upon the neck of the man she loved.

On arriving at Polwarth, they were met by the glad villagers, with whom the fair ladies joined hands, and they danced together in joy around a thorn tree, upon the village green.

In a few weeks, each of the maidens gave her hand to her deliverer—Margaret to Sir Patrick, and Marion to his brother George. On their marriage-day, the dance around the thorn upon the green was resumed, and a festive crowd tripped joyously around it, blessing the bride of Polwarth and her fair sister, Marion of Kimmerghame; and the music to which they that day danced, proceeded from the pipes of king Johnny Faa, who, with half-a-dozen of his people, sat each with a pair of union pipes beneath his arm, and discoursing "most eloquent music," without "fee, favour, or reward," save that they were partakers of the good things which were that day plentifully circulated upon Polwarth green.

In concluding this account of the co-heiresses of Polwarth and Kimmerghame, it is only necessary to add that, from her union with Hume of Wedderburn, the fair Margaret became the progenitor of the future Earls of Marchmont.

BILL STANLEY;

OR,

A SAILOR'S STORY.

READER, if thou hast never visited the Fern Isles, but intendest to visit them, thou hast a pleasure in reserve—a positive, downright, profitable pleasure—profitable as regards the health of the body, for a trip upon the sea makes the blood feel ten years younger, and dance in the veins as merrily as the waves around us; and profitable also to the mind, by filling it with fresh objects for wonder and contemplation; and it is a fact very generally overlooked, that the poor jaded mind stands as much in need of new objects to work upon, as its plebeian neighbour, the body, stands in need of rest or change of diet. It is a matter of small consequence, whether you go in a yacht or in a steamer; in the former you will have as much pleasure, in the latter more punctuality. But it is a matter of much consequence what sort of company you have on board—in a word, what materials your fellow-voyagers are made of. If they be all your exceedingly good-natured sort of people—people bowed down with politeness and a desire to please—you won't be half an hour at sea till you find them dead as uncorked small beer that has stood an hour in the sun, or insipid as milk and water. I had as lief dine upon dried veal as be mewed up a day with such society. If you wish to relish the company, and to see character developed, be careful to have it sprinkled with the salt, the pepper, and the mustard of human dispositions; as for the vinegar, even a drop of that would be too much. Sickness might improve your health for the future, but would impair your pleasure for the present; and, in truth, sea sick-

ness appears to be as pale, ghostly, and uncomfortable a companion as a man may meet withal. But, if the day be fine, and the breeze moderate, there is but little chance of your being sick. At any rate, you will find about half a pound of well-boiled ham, just as the vessel kisses the salt water an excellent preventive, and half the pleasure of a sea trip lies in the relish, the *salt*, which it gives to the homeliest morsel.

When the Ferns are first seen, what appeared but two, or at most three islands, are now found to be a cluster of sixteen or twenty—the ocean homes of ten thousand times ten thousand sea fowls; which now may be seen rising in myriads, blackening the air and covering the surface of the islands, as if a thunder-cloud hung over them—anon their snowy wings flash in the sunbeams, countless specks of light begem the seeming cloud, and flickering for a moment, assume the appearance of a magnificent rainbow instinct with motion—and, again, as if turning from the flashing of their own beautiful plumage, settle like darkness on the rocks. To appreciate the striking effect of these islands, it is necessary to sail round them, as well as to land upon them. Each appears to be surrounded by a pier or bulwark of nature's masonry. What is termed the Pinnacle Island is the most effective. We have been informed that it bears a strong resemblance to St. Helena—the grave of Europe's conqueror. The pinnacles are a mass of perpendicular rocks, representing towers, battlements, and fortifications, apparently as perfect to the eye as if formed by the hands of man, but that their terrible strength seems to frown in mockery on his puny efforts. They, alone, are worth visiting again and again. They make man feel his own insignificance, and the power of the Omnipotent voice that called into existence the mighty ocean and the wonders of its bosom. Burns, on visiting a place in the Highlands, said it was "enough to make a blockhead a poet;" and we say that the man who could visit the Fern Isles without feeling the influence of poetry within him, has a head as stupid as the sea-fowl that inhabit them, and an imagination as impenetrable as the rocks that compose the pinnacles.

About three years ago, a mixed party left Newcastle, in a steamer, on a pleasure excursion to the islands. Amongst the company, there was a man of a weather-beaten but happy and

intelligent countenance whose age seemed to be at least sixty, and whose general appearance and manners indicated that he was an old seaman, and perhaps had been a purser or a sailing-master in the navy, or the commander of a merchantman, who had made enough to enable him to cast anchor ashore, in peace, quiet, and plenty, for the remainder of his days. His shrewdness, his knowledge, and his humour, soon rendered him a favourite with the company.

On arriving at the islands, the party went on shore; and, dividing themselves into groups, sat down, and spread out their provisions on the rocks; about a dozen prevailed upon the old sailor to accompany them, and to be their messmate. After dinner, they began to sing, and the old tar was called upon for a song.

"Gentlemen," said he, "I never could raise a single stave in my life; but, if it's all one to you, I will spin you a sailor's yarn."

"Agreed," cried they—"all! all!"

"Well," began the old seaman, "it was a year or two before the short peace of Amiens, that two young seamen were sitting in a public-house in North Shields, which I shall please to speak of as the sign of the Old Ship; and its landlord I shall call Mr. Danvers. The name of the one sailor was William Stanley, the other Jack Jenkins. Jack was but a plain fellow, though no lubber; but Bill was a glorious young fellow—the admiration of everybody; though only the son of a poor laundress, who wrought hard to bring him up, while a boy, he had contrived to get knowledge and book-learning enough to have been made commodore of a college. I may here tell you too, that old Danvers had a daughter called Mary—one of the best and prettiest girls on all Tyneside. She was Bill's consort on all occasions; and they were true to each other as a needle is to the Pole. Jack and he were friends and shipmates; and being sitting together—

"'I say, Bill,' said his comrade, 'as we are to sail upon a long voyage to-morrow, what say you for a run up to Newcastle to the theatre to-night? You shall take Polly Danvers, and I shall take my old woman.' For Jack was married.

"'It is of no use thinking of it,' answered he; 'I am brought up here as though it were my last mooring.'

"'Whew! whew!' whistled the other—'with pretty Polly for a chain cable. But I don't ask you to part company with each other. So let us make ready and start.'

"'No,' added Stanley, 'the best play and the best actors in the world would be to me to-night like a land-lubber sitting smiling and piping upon a flute on the sea-banks, while I was being dashed to pieces by the breakers under his feet.'

"'What are you drifting at, Bill?' said Jenkins; 'your upper works seem to have hoisted a moon-raker.'

"'I am unhappy, Jack,' said he, earnestly, 'and the cause presses like lead upon my heart. It throbs like fire within my forehead. For more than twenty years I have been tossed about as a helmless vessel, without compass or reckoning. It is hard, Jack, that I can't mention my mother's name, but the blush upon my cheek must dry up the tear that falls for her memory. Three months ago, as you know, I came home, with the earnings of a two years' voyage in my pocket, and I found——O shipmate! when I expected to have flung my savings into my mother's lap, I found her dying in a miserable garret, with scarce a blanket to cover her! She had been long ill; and the rich old rascal called Wates (who came to this part of the country some years ago) seized all but the straw on which she lay for his rent. I thought my heart had burst as I flung myself upon the ground by her side. A mist came over my eyes. I neither knew what I saw nor heard. I felt her cold arms clinging round my neck. She spoke—she told me *my father's name!* Comrade! it was the first time I had heard it! The word father pierced my heart like a dagger, and, in my agony, I knew not what she said. I started, I entreated her to repeat it again! But my mother was silent!—she was dead:—the arms of a corpse were fastened round my neck. With the breath which uttered the name she had not spoken for more than twenty years, her spirit fled!—and I—I cannot remember it.'

"'Vast there, Bill!' cried Jack, wiping a tear from his eyes; 'that is tragedy enough without going to the play for it. But, for the sake of Mary Danvers, the prettiest girl on Tyne side (not even excepting my old woman), cheer up, my lad!

"'If that should cheer me,' said he, 'I believe it is the principal cause why I am sad to-day.'

"'Why then,' said Jack, 'don't you take an example by me, and run your frigate to church at once? You will find a plain gold ring is a precious fast anchor.'

"'But what,' replied Stanley, 'if the old commodore, her father, won't allow me to take her in tow?'

"'He won't,' cried Jenkins—'that's a good un! Old dad Danvers won't allow you to splice with her! What's his reason? I 'm sure he can't say but you are as sober as the chief judge of the admiralty.'

"'To-night,' replied Stanley, in a tone of agitation, 'he found her in my company, and called, or rather dragged her away; and, as they went, I heard him upbraid her bitterly, and ask if the meanness of her spirit would permit her to throw herself away upon——upon'——William became more agitated, the words he had to utter seemed to stick in his throat; and his friend Jenkins exclaimed—'Upon a better man than ever he was in his life! But what did he say, Bill—*upon* what was she going to throw herself away?'

"'Upon a beggar's nameless *bastard!* he said,' groaned poor Stanley, striking his hand upon his brow.

"'What d'ye say?' cried Jenkins, clenching his fist; had the old fellow's ribs not been removed off the first letter, this hand had shivered them! Flesh and blood, Stanley, how did ye endure it?'

"'I started to my feet,' said he; 'my teeth grated together; but I heard her gentle voice reproving him for the word; and it fell upon my heart like the moon upon the sea, Jack, after a storm. My hand fell by my side. He is her father, thought I; and for the first time in his life, Will Stanley brooked an affront.'

"Just as he was speaking, a gentle tap came to the door. 'Good-night, Jack, added he; 'I understand the signal; the old cruiser is off the coast, and now for the smuggling trade.'

"I may tell you that the reason why old Danvers was so averse to his daughter keeping company with Bill Stanley was, that there was a hypocritical middle-aged villain, called Squire Wates—(the same that Bill spoke of as having sold off his mother, and left her to die upon straw)—I hate the very name of the old rascal! Well, you see, this same Squire Wates that I am telling you of, came from abroad some-

where, and bought a vast deal of property about Shields He was said to be as rich as an Exchange Jew—and perhaps he was. He had cast an eye upon Mary Danvers, and the gray-haired rascal sought, through the agency of his paltry yellow dross, to accomplish the destruction of the innocent and beautiful creature; and thinking that Will Stanley was an obstacle to the accomplishment of his purpose, he determined to have him removed. He also persuaded old Danvers that he wished to make his daughter his wife. Conscience! —after half drowning such a hoary-headed knave, I would have hung him up at a yard arm, without judge or jury, and buried him in a dunghill without benefit of clergy. He employed a fellow of the name of Villars as a confederate in his base intentions—one who had been thrice a bankrupt, without being able to show a loss that he had sustained, or pay a shilling to his creditors. This creature he professed to set up in business—in something connected with the West India trade—and he prevailed on landlord Danvers to embark in the speculation, and to risk all that he had saved in the Old Ship for five and twenty years. So that the firm—if such a disgraceful transaction might be called by that appellation—went by the designation of *Villars and Danvers.* The firm, however, was altogether an invention of Wates, to promote his designs. There was another whom they engaged in their scheme—a fellow who was a disgrace to the sea—the very spawn of salt water—a boatswain Rigby; and the frigate to which he belonged was cruising upon the coast for the protection of the coasters. But you will hear more about these worthies by and by.

"It was within a few hours of the time, when, as I told you before, Bill Stanley and Jack Jenkins were to sail upon a twelvemonth's voyage. The vessel to which they belonged was lying out in the harbour below Tynemouth Castle, and sweethearts and wives were accompanying the crew to the beach, where a boat was waiting to take them aboard.

"Mary had ventured to accompany William part of the way towards the beach, to bid him adieu; and when, through fear of her father finding them together, she would have returned, he held her hand more firmly within his, and said—'Fear nothing, love; it is the last time we shall see each other for

twelve months. Come down as far as the boat; and do not let it be said, when it pulls off, that Bill Stanley was the only soul in the ship's crew, that had not a living creature on the shore to wave *good-bye* to—or one to drop a tear for his departure, more than if he were a dog. If I be alone and an outcast in the world, do not let me feel it now.'

"'Willingly,' she replied, 'would I follow you, not only there, but to the ends of the earth. But my father will be on the beach, watching the boat; or, if he be not, the spies of another will be there, and my accompanying you would only make my persecution the greater during your absence.'

"'What!' exclaimed he, 'have I then a rival for your affections, one that I know not of, and whose addresses are backed by your father's influence? Who is he?—or what is his name? Tell me, Mary—I conjure you, by your plighted faith.'

"'Give not the name of a rival,' said she, 'to a hypocritical wretch, whose heart I would not tread beneath my heel, for fear of pollution! A rival!—William, I would not insult the meanest reptile that feeds upon garbage, by placing it in competition with a hypocrite so base and mean! A rival!—rather would I breathe the vapours of a ploughed charnel-house for ever, than be blasted with his breath for a single hour! No—my heart is yours—it is wholly yours—fear not.'

"'Mary,' said he, solemnly, 'if I am worthy of your love, I am not unworthy of your confidence. You would not, you could not, bestow such language on the most worthless, where personal indignity had not been offered, or intended you. Name him, I adjure—nay, I *command* you,' he added wildly; 'it will yet be three hours till the vessel sail, and in that period I will avenge the indignity that has been offered to you.'

"'Speak not of such a thing,' said she; 'whatever be his designs, against such a persecutor she is a weak woman who cannot defend herself. Would you raise your hand against a worm, or draw a sword against a venomous fly? Come, think not of it—look not so; would a vessel of the line throw a broadside into a paltry cock-boat? Punish him!—no, despise him!'

"'It may be so,' he rejoined; 'but my heart is to yours

as the eyelid is to the eye-ball, and even a moth between them causes agony. Name him, that I may judge of his power to do evil, or the vessel which is this day to sail—sails without me.'

"'Then, that your contempt may equal mine,' added she, 'think of the creature *Wates!* He whose name stands first on the list of *published* charities—and who sends the newsman abroad to trumpet his piety, while villany lurks in his grey hairs.'

"'What!' he exclaimed wildly—'*Wates!* the murderer of my mother!—who sent his minions to sell the very bed from beneath her, and left her to perish on the ground! Justice! where sleep thy thunderbolts? Mary, we shall return—I go not to sea to-day.'

"'William,' said she affectionately, 'do you then fear to trust me? Did he carry honours in his right hand, and in his left the wealth of the world, and lay them both at my feet—I feel that within me that would spurn them from me, as I would an insect that crawled upon me to sting me. To you would I give my hand and beg for a subsistence, rather than share with him the throne of an empire. What then do you fear? In your own words, if I am unworthy of your confidence, I am unworthy your love.'

"'No, Mary!' he cried, 'it is not fear. Wrong not yourself, neither wrong my bosom, that is full to bursting, by harbouring such a thought. When darkness issues from the sunbeams, I will doubt your affection; when a whirlwind sweeps across the sea, and the billows rise not at its voice, I will fear your truth—not till then. But I know that to associate the name of the most virtuous woman with that of a villain, is to make the world suspect her. Ah, Mary! in the innocence of your own heart you suspect not the iniquity of which some are capable. Let the name of a libertine be attached to the character of a man, and especially of a rich man, till his crimes are heaped up like a world of sin upon the shoulders of their contemptible author, and the next sun that rises, in the eyes of the world, melts away their enormity, if not their remembrance; but, if the mere shadow of such a villain's breath pass over the character of a woman, its

stains will remain fixed and immovable, growing in blackness and gathering misery, until life and memory have made their last port. I will not speak of revenge, to distress you—but I shall not undertake this voyage. I will remain on shore, not to guard your innocence, but to protect your name from slander.'

"'William,' she answered, 'ignorant of the world I may be; but I know that your remaining on shore would only give rise to the calumnies which you would wish to prevent. You would make yourself an object for the laughter and remarks of your shipmates; and would disoblige your owners, who, after this voyage, have promised you the command of a vessel. And for what would you do this, but through fear of a wretch, on whom I could not waste a single thought, and on whom I regret that I have thrown away a single word?'

"At that moment, Jack Jenkins, with his wife, Betty, weeping like a mermaid, under his arm, hove in sight, and the moment he beheld his comrade, he called out—'Hollo, Bill! how did you and Polly manage to pass the old commodore of "*the ship?*" I saw him keeping a look out abaft there.' But his wife sobbed while he was speaking, and as he approached his shipmate, he continued—'Take aback in time, Bill, and don't marry—I ask your pardon, Polly, and yours too, Betty, my love,' kissing his wife's cheeks; 'I don't exactly mean not to marry either—but this parting company breaks up one's heart, like an old fir-built craft that is not fit for firewood. I wish the lubber's back had a round dozen that invented the word—*good-bye*. It always sticks in my throat, like pushing a piece of old junk down it.'

"While he was speaking, a king's cutter shot round a point of land, with a pack of lobsters abaft; and the black fellow, Boatswain Rigby, sat in her bow. She was within twenty yards of where they stood.

"'Fly, William!—fly!' said Mary wildly; 'it is you that they seek—my heart tells me it is you—oh fly!'

"'Be not afraid, dearest,' said Stanley; 'I do not think they mean harm to us, and if they did, flight is impossible.'

"'Oh, run! run!' cried Betty Jenkins; 'see, the marines are handling their muskets.

"'Run! why it's of no use running,' said her husband; 'the lobsters would bring a fellow up with their pepper boxes before he could run a quarter of a cable's length.'

"The boat took the ground, and Rigby, with a party of sailors and marines, sprang on shore.

"'Well, my hearties,' said the boatswain, 'will either of you volunteer to serve his Majesty?'

"'Why, sir—' Jack Jenkins was replying, when his wife placed her hand upon his mouth, saying—'Are you a fool, Jack?'

"'What!' said the boatswain, 'no volunteers! Well, we want but one of you. This is our man,' and he touched Stanley on the shoulder with his cutlass.

"'Oh!' cried Mary, addressing the boatswain, as she fell upon William's neck; 'spare him! spare him! and with my last coin I will endeavour to procure a substitute in his stead.'

"'It won't do, my pretty maiden,' said Rigby; 'in these times we can't lose so promising a prize for a woman's tears. Marines, to the boat with him.'

"'Hold! servile slaves!' cried Stanley as they attempted to drag him away; 'allow me to bid adieu to my Mary, and to my friends here, or I defy the worst ye can do.'

"'Quick, then,' said Rigby, 'the service cannot wait for farewells.'

Mary still clung to William's arm. 'Good-bye, Jack,' said he, with the salt water rolling in his eyes, and his heart ready to burst—'and when you return from the voyage, see that you keep the land sharks off my poor Mary, for the sake of your old messmate.'

"'Belay, Bill!' cried Jenkins; 'my heart's afloat. Heaven bless you, lad, and be at ease respecting Polly. Should any lubber pull alongside, my name's not Jenkins if I don't force him to strike his colours, and shove off with broken timbers. Good-bye, Bill—give me your hand; and, though they were my last words, I say—I'm blowed if ever I shook the flipper of a better fellow!'

"'Mary!' sobbed he, pressing her to his heart; 'farewell, love!—we shall meet again!—you won't forget Bill Stanley!'

"'Stay! oh, stay!' she exclaimed. But the boatswain waved his hand impatiently, and his crew rudely tearing them asunder, William Stanley was dragged to the boat, and borne on board the frigate.

"Well, twelve months passed after the impressment of William Stanley, and Squire Wates found that his wealth offered no temptation to Mary Danvers, to enable him to effect her ruin. He, however, had inveigled her father into his meshes; and, through the pretended failure of the mercantile speculation in which Villars and old Danvers had been engaged, the former brought a claim of five hundred pounds against the latter, who had lost his all. And the plan of the villains was that Villars should cast the old man into prison, and that Wates should come forward, and professing to pay the debt set the father at liberty, and obtain, through the daughter's gratitude, what her virtue spurned. To ensure success to this master-stroke of their wickedness it was to be attended by a mock marriage, in which Boatswain Rigby (the frigate to which he belonged being again lying off Tynemouth), was, for a *consideration*, to officiate as chaplain.

"It was on the very day that this piece of iniquity was hatched, that Jack Jenkins, having returned—and having learned from his wife, and from Mary Danvers, of some of the attempts that had been made by Squire Wates, during his absence, and since the impressment of his comrade—hurried to the house of the old rascal, with a rope's end in his hand. He found the street door open, and without knocking, he went to the foot of the stairs, and demanded to see Squire Wates.

"'You can't see him, fellow,' said a portly, pampered man-servant.

"'Can't see him,' roared Jack; 'he shall see me presently, and feel me too. So come along, Mr. Powdered-pate; show me where he is, or I'll capsize you head and heels.'

"The old villain himself, hearing the uproar, came blustering out of a room, crying—'Who are you, fellow? and how dare you, in such a manner, break into my house? What is your business with me!'

"'Vast there with your questions, old leprous-livered knave!' vociferated Jenkins. 'As to who I am, I am a better fellow than ever stood in your shoes; and, as to daring to break into your house, before I leave it, I shall dare to break your head! And as to my business with you, I intend to make you *sensible* of that too,' and as he utttered the word *sensible*, he shook the piece of rope in his hand, and continued—'Now, I have answered your questions, answer one to me. Do you remember a lad of the name of Bill Stanley—eh?'

"The Squre shook with terror; but endeavouring to assume an air of authority, stammered out, 'No—no—fellow, I—I know no such person. Begone, sir. Be—begone, I say.'

"'Smash me if I do!' added Jenkins. 'And belike you don't know Polly Danvers either? Well, perhaps this piece of old junk may sharpen your memory!'

"Wates called upon his servants for assistance.

"'Hands off, ye beggarly swabs! or kiss the boatswain's sister!' continued the sailor, laying lustily around him, and causing the domestics to shrink back. 'Vast there!' he continued, laying hold of the squire, who attempted to escape; 'not so fast—I ain't quite done with you yet. Now, you see, I'm an old friend and shipmate of Bill Stanley's; and the day that he was pressed, and you were the cause of it, Bill says to me, "Jack," says he, "when I'm away, see that no land-shark comes alongside my Polly." "Fear nothing, Bill," says I, "hang me if I don't—there's my hand on't." Now, I've been at sea ever since, until the other day, and my old woman tells me that you, you cream-faced scoundrel, not only had the impudence to pull alongside Polly Danvers, but had the audacity to propose—shiver me if I can name it—but take that—'

"And so saying, he began to lay the rope fiercely round the shoulders of his victim; and as the servants again closed upon the sailor to rescue their master, he dashed them to the ground, to the right and to the left, and finally rushed out of the house, crying—'who shall say that Jack is the lad that would break his promise?'

"I told you it was a part of the plot of Wates, that his confederate Villars was to cast old Danvers into prison on ac-

count of the pretended debt. The old landlord was sitting in the parlour of the Old Ship, trembling at the horrors of a jail, and fearing every moment the entrance of a sheriff's officer to arrest him, while his wife and daughter endeavoured to comfort him, and he said mournfully—'Wife, after being married thirty years as we have been, I did not expect that we should have been parted in this way. I did not think that, after toiling in the Old Ship here for twenty years, to save a matter of money for our daughter, that I should lose all and my hair grow white in a prison. But it is of no use mourning about it; for I question if those for whom we wished the money would have thanked us. I know I would not have seen a father or mother of mine dragged to jail like a common thief, if I by any means could have prevented it.' And as he spoke, he cast a look of sorrow and upbraiding upon Mary, who wept on her mother's shoulder.

"'Don't be cruel, husband,' said his wife, 'how can you distress our daughter? I am sure she can't help the state we are reduced to, any more than I can. But I always said what all your jobbing and trafficking in company with the bankrupt Villars would end in. I know thou'rt sufering enough, and we are all suffering; but don't be reflecting upon our dear Mary, for a better child never parents had.'

"'I ain't making reflections,' replied he peevishly; 'only I'm saying, I would not have stood so by my father. It is no reflection to say that Mary might have been a lady, and then I am sure I should not have been dragged from this parlour—where I have sat for twenty years—to a dungeon in a jail.'

"'Father,' said Mary, 'what would you have me do? Would you have me become an object for the virtuous to shun, for your enemies to triumph over and despise, and for the abandoned to insult? Would you have me to sell my purity, my peace of mind, my present and eternal happiness, to a miscreant who carries sanctity on his brow, and morality between his teeth, while his heart is a putrid sepulchre? Would you have me to do this to save you from a prison?—and to which you have been brought by your own simplicity. To assist you

I would become the servant of servants—I would brush the dust from the shoes of strangers, in this house where I was born. But while the tear blanches my cheeks for your misfortunes, cause them not to burn with shame.'

"'Why, daughter,' replied he, angrily, 'I don't understand thy high words at all. But though I don't know so much of my dictionary as thou dost, I know those books you have read have turned thy head with foolish and high notions. I know you won't have Mr. Wates, because he is a thought oldish, and belike doesn't make love like one of the romance sparks you read about. But I say, I'm neither blind nor deaf, and, for all that you have said, I know as how it is marriage, and nough else, that Mr. Wates intends. But, rich as he is, you won't have him, but will see your poor old father dragged through the streets, like a thief to a prison. O Mary! it is a sore thing to have an ungrateful child!'

"'O husband!—husband!' said Mrs. Danvers; 'they were thy high notions, and none of our dear daughters, that has brought us to this. But it is not my part to add to thy sorrows, when thou art about to be torn from my side. Alack! I never thought to be made a widow in this sort.'

"'Wife!—wife!' cried he impatiently; 'be it my blame, or whose blame it may, we can't make a better of it now; but it is very hard to have lost the earnings of twenty years, and to be parted from wife and child. Don't be angry with me, daughter. Your father meant all he has said or done for your good. Come, give your old father a kiss and forgive him. It may be the last he will ever receive from you in his own house.'

"She threw her arms around his neck and wept; and while the father and daughter embraced each other, a sheriff's officer entered the house.

"'Well-a-day!—well-a-day!' cried Mrs. Danvers, as she perceived him; 'thy errand, and the disgrace of it, will break my heart.'

"'Don't be distressed, good woman,' said the officer, 'it is no such disgrace but that many of the best in the country must submit to it every day. Mr. Danvers,' added he, 'I

am sorry to inform you you must walk with me. This paper will inform you, you are my prisoner.'

"'It is very hard,' said the old man; 'I say, sir, it is very hard to be called a prisoner in a free country for doing nothing at all. Heaven knows about this here debt that is brought against me, for I don't. But I know that locking me up in a jail won't pay it.'

"'Oh, cruel law!' exclaimed Mary; 'framed by fools, and put in force by usurers. Let justice laugh at the wise legislators, who shut up the springs, and expect the reservoirs to be filled.'

"'Why, miss,' said the official, 'I didn't make the law; I be only the officer of the law. So come along, Mr. Danvers, my good man, for I can't stop all day to hear your daughter's speeches. I have other jobs of the same sort in hand, and business must be attended to.'

"'Go, unfeeling man,' answered Mary, 'we will go with you. Bear with misfortune, my dear father, like a man. I will accompany you—take my arm. If I have hung upon yours with pride, upon more joyful occasions, it shall not be said that I was ashamed for you to rest upon mine, when they led you through the streets to a prison.' And she accompanied him to the place of confinement.

"It was two days after old Danvers had been taken to prison that the frigate into which William Stanley had been impressed made towards the land, and rode off the mouth of the Tyne, while a boat's crew were ordered on shore. Boatswain Rigby, apprehensive that William would request to be one of them, and that his request might be granted, had, previous to the boat leaving the vessel, sought to quarrel with him, and struck him; and requested of the lieutenant, that, in consequence of the insolence he had used towards him, he should not be permitted to go on shore, but, as a punishment, placed on duty.

"Poor Stanley was walking the deck, saying unto himself —'Refused permission to go ashore! Yes, Rigby! petty tyrant as thou art, thou shalt rue it! Refused a privilege that would have caused a slave to rebel, had he been denied it. But the time will come, when we shall meet upon terms

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of equality; and were his cowardice equal to his brutality—yea, were he shielded by a breast-plate hard as his own heart—my revenge shall find a passage through both; and his blood shall wash out the impression and the shame of the blow, with which to-day he dared to smite me as a dog. The remembrance of that blow sticks as a dagger in my throat—its remembrance chokes me!' And hurried on by the agitations of his feelings, he spoke aloud as he continued. 'Not only denied to set my foot upon the place of my nativity, but struck!—yes, struck like a hound, by a creature I despise! O memory!' he added, 'torture me not! Here, every remembered object strikes painfully on my eyeballs! The church and the churchyard, where my mother's body now mingles with the dust, are now before me, and I am prohibited from shedding a tear upon her grave. The banks of the Tyne, where I wandered with my Mary, while it sighed affection by our side, and the blue sea, which lay behind us, raising a song of love, are now visible—but though they are still beautiful, they are as beautiful things that lived and were loved, but are now dead!'

"In the intensity of his feelings, he perceived not a boat which drew alongside; and, while he yet stood in a reverie, his old crony, Jack Jenkins, sprang on board, and, assisted by a waterman, raised Mary Danvers to the deck.

"'Yonder he is,' exclaimed Jack, 'leaning over the gunwale, as melancholy as a merman making his last will and testament in the presence of his father Neptune.'

"Stanley started round at the voice of his friend; he beheld his betrothed wife; for you know they were the same as betrothed—they had vowed to be true to each other, and, I believe, broken a ring betwixt them.

"'My own Mary!' he cried, and sprang forward to meet her. The poor things fell upon each other's neck, and wept like children.

"'Shove me your fist, my hearty,' cried Jenkins, 'as soon as you have done there. I thought I would give you a bit of an agreeable surprise.'

"'There, Jack!—there, my honest old friend!' cried

Bill, stretching out his one hand, and with the other supporting his sweetheart. 'My head and heart are scudding beneath a sudden tempest of joy! Speak, Mary, love; let me again hear your voice thrilling like music through my breast! O, Jack! this visit is like one who has been run down in a squall at midnight, and ere he is aware that the waters have covered over him, he finds himself aloft, listening to the harps of the happy.'

"'I don't know what it is like, Bill,' said the other; 'but it ain't like the meetings we used to have.'

"'Why so silent, love,' said William, addressing Mary, 'in another hour I shall be off duty, and in one day of happiness let us forget the past.'

"'Dear William,' she replied, 'I know not what I should say nor what I should conceal. I have so little of joy to communicate, that I would not embitter the pleasure of the present short hour, by a recital of the events that have occurred during your absence.'

"'Hide nothing from me, Mary,' said he, earnestly; 'but tell me, have my forebodings, regarding the monster Wates, been but too true? Or are your parents——You tremble, love—you are pale! O Jenkins, speak!—tell me what is the meaning of this?"

"'Drop it, Bill, my dear fellow,' said the other, 'drop it. You have got Polly alongside of you there, with a heart as sound and true as when you left her; and don't distress her with questions; she didn't come aboard for that. I served out the old fellow Wates, as you requested me, with a rope's end, t'other night, and that pretty smartly too. And, with regard to father Danvers, why, poor soul, somehow or other, misfortune has got the weather-gauge of him, and the other day he was taken to jail. So, say no more about it, Bill—we can't mend it.'

"'Why,' he exclaimed, stamping his foot as he spoke, 'why am I a slave? And who, my beloved Mary—who now shall protect you? But I can still do something. I have a bank bill for a hundred pounds, the savings of former voyages. I know not why I took it out of my locker this morning. I had it carefully placed away with the ringlet which I cut from your brow, dearest. Here are both; I

will keep the ringlet, and think it dearer than ever; take you the note, my love; it may be of service to your father.'

"'No, no, William,' she cried, 'I must not, I cannot! Dearest, most generous of men, do not *pity* me, or I shall wither in your sight. Look on me as you were wont. But, oh! let me not stand before you as a beggar. Keep it—as you love me, keep it—make me not ashamed to look in your face.'

"'Then take it, Jack, take it,' said Stanley, handing him the note; 'do with it as I desire. Say nothing more now; for here comes our Boatswain Rigby, the curse of our ship's crew and the disgrace of the service.'

"Mary shuddered, as Rigby approached them and boisterously said—'Who have you got there, fellow, and you upon duty? I shall report you instantly. Some of your old friends, and meditating an escape with them, I see.' And, turning to Jenkins, he added—'Who, sir, gave you permission to come on board this vessel, and to bring *a woman of that description* with you? Off, instantly, or I shall detain you too. You, girl, must remain;' and he approached her familiarly to take her by the arm. Stanley sprang forward, exclaiming—'Hold, sir, hold! You have insulted her by your words; but touch not, as you would remain a living man, the hem of her garment.'

"'Begone to your duty, presumptuous slave!' cried the boatswain, fiercely; 'begone!' And as he spoke, he raised his hand, and struck him on the breast.

"'Again!—ha!—ha!—ha!' exclaimed William, like a demon laughing through excess of torture; 'twice you have struck me, Rigby, to-day!—struck me in the presence of her who is dearer to me than life! Now, heaven have mercy on thee!' And, seizing the boatswain by the breast, he hurled him violently on the deck and planted his foot upon his bosom.

"'William!—dear William!' cried Mary; 'forbear!—forbear!'

"'Bill, Bill, my dear fellow!' cried Jack, 'don't lose your life for the sake of a ruffian.'

"William continued standing with his foot upon his

breast, laughing in the same wild and fearful manner, and shouting—'struck me!' while Rigby called for help. A number of the ship's crew sprang forward to the rescue of the boatswain, who rising, cried—'The irons instantly! Set a double watch over him! He has attempted, as ye have witnessed, the life of an officer, and his first promotion shall be the yard-arm.'

"While they were placing the irons upon him, Mary threw herself at Rigby's feet, exclaiming—'Oh, spare him!—save the life of my William!—by her that bore you, or that loves you, save him!—save him!'

"'Rise, Mary!' cried William, 'that our farewell glance be not one of reproach. Pray for vengeance on my enemy. Farewell, Jack—for ever this time! See my Mary safe!' And as they were bearing him away, he turned his head towards her, and cried—'Dearest, we shall meet hereafter where the villain and the tyrant cannot enter.'

"She fell insensible on the deck, and, in a state of unconsciousness, was conveyed on shore by Jenkins.

"The frigate was commanded by Captain Sherbourne, and, when the officers were assembled to hold a court-martial over poor Stanley, he said, addressing Rigby—'There is not a man in the British Navy, Boatswain Rigby, more determined than myself to preserve order and discipline; but while, as captain of this vessel, I am compelled to enforce the law, I am no advocate for the inhuman and degrading lash; nor can I, with indifference, sentence a brave fellow to be hung up for doing that which the best feelings of his nature, and the sentiments of a hero, prompted him to do. I sit here as judge, and am neither advocate for the prisoner, nor your accuser; but, if the law must be satisfied, the offence, wherever it is found, shall be punished, whether in the accused or in the accuser. For it has not escaped my observation, that no officer under me has ever found a fault in the prisoner, save yourself. Are you then resolved and prepared to prosecute your charge?'

"'I am both resolved and prepared, Captain Sherbourne,' said Rigby: 'and I demand the satisfaction of the laws of my country and the service, not only as an officer that has been insulted and injured, but as a British officer and subject whose life has been attempted.'

"'This is a serious charge, boatswain,' said Captain Sherbourne, 'let the prisoner be brought forward.'

"The culprit was brought up, guarded, and in fetters, and, being placed before his judges—'Prisoner,' began the captain, 'I deeply regret that one of your appearance, and of your uniform excellent conduct and courage, while under my command should be brought before me under such circumstances as those in which you now stand; and I regret the more that if the charges be proved, the proofs of your former character and courage, which are known to us, will be of no avail. You are charged, not only with striking your commanding officer, which is itself a heinous offence, but also with attempting his life. Do you plead guilty or not guilty?'

"'That,' replied the prisoner, 'is as your honour pleases to interpret the deed. But there is no such charge reckoned against me in the log book aloft.'

"'You then plead not guilty,' said the captain.

"'I am guilty,' answered he, 'of having acted as it was the duty of a man to act. I am guilty of having convinced a villain, that a proud heart may be found beneath a plain blue jacket. I am guilty of having proved that there are souls and feelings before the mast as high-minded and as keen as upon the quarter-deck. But the head and front of my offending hath this extent, no more.'

"'He speaks bravely,' muttered some of those who heard him; 'the chaplain himself couldn't have said it so well by half.'

"'Boatswain,' said the captain, in the hearing of the prisoner, 'state the particulars of your charge against him.'

"'While it was his turn on duty,' said Rigby, 'I found him neglecting it, and plotting his escape from the frigate in conversation with a suspicious looking man, and a girl of common fame'———

"''Tis false—despicable recreant!—'tis false!' interrupted William wildly; 'she is spotless as the fountains of light! Breathe again dishonour on her name, and these chains that bind me shall hurl you, with the falsehood blistering on your tongue, down to'———

"'Silence, young man!' interposed the captain, 'I com-

mand you. If you have cause of complaint you will afterwards be heard. You may be mistaken, Mr. Rigby, regarding the character of the young woman, and you will not better your cause in our eyes, by unnecessarily blackening the prisoner's.'

"'Captain Sherbourne,' inquired the boatswain, in an offended tone, 'do you question my honour?'

"'I permit no such interruptions, sir,' said the captain; 'we sit here to deal with facts, not with honour. Go on with your charge.'

"'When,' resumed Rigby, 'I overheard him plotting his escape from the service, and commanded him to his duty, he haughtily rebelled; and on my ordering the stranger on shore, he sprang forward, and dashing me on the deck, stamped his foot upon my breast, threatening and attempting to murder me, as these witnesses will prove.'

"'Stand forward, my good fellows,' said Captain Sherbourne, addressing two of the seamen, who had been witnesses of the assault, and assisted in rescuing the boatswain. 'Give your evidence truly. What do you know of this affair?'

"'Why, your honour,' said the first seaman, 'just that the boatswain was lying upon the deck, and that Bill there had his foot upon his breast.'

"'Do you suppose,' inquired the captain, 'he had a design upon his life?"

"'Please your honour,' answered the seaman, 'I can't say; but you had better ask himself. If he had, he won't deny it; for I'll take my Bible oath that Bill, poor fellow, never hove the hatchet in his life—and I don't believe he would do it to save his life. I could always be as sure of what he said, as I am of our latitude, when your honour's own hand works it out.'

"Well,' inquired the captain, addressing the other seaman, 'what evidence have you to offer?'

"'I don't know anything about evidence, your honours,' answered the seaman. 'The boatswain was lying on the deck, and poor Bill had his foot upon his breast sure enough, and was laughing in such a dismal way as made me think that he had gone maddish through ill-usage or something. For, poor fellow, he was never easily raised, and though brave as a lion, was harmless as a lamb—all the crew will swear that of him.'

"'Prisoner,' said the captain, 'I am sorry that the evidence of these witnesses, who seem as sorry for your fate as I am, but too strongly confirm at least a part of the charges against you. If you have anything to say in your defence the court is inclined to hear you.'

"'I am neither insensible of, nor ungrateful for the kindness of my commander,' answered William; 'and for the sake of her and her only, of whom the boatswain dared to speak as one dishonoured, I do not hold life without its value. But I disdain to purchase it by the humiliation of vindicating myself further from the accusations of a wretch I despise. Let the law take its award. Death is preferable to being the servant of a slave.'

"'I know not,' whispered Captain Sherbourne to his first lieutenant, 'how my lips shall pronounce sentence of death on this brave young fellow. His heroic courage and his talents compel me to revere and love him—and there is something, I know not what, in his features, haunts me as a lost remembrance.' Then turning towards the prisoner, he added—'Before the sentence of the court is passed, whatever requests you may wish to have performed, I will see them faithfully carried into effect.'

"'Thanks! thanks!' replied William; 'I have but little to offer in return for your goodness; but the same spirit that made me resent the indignity of my accuser, would, were my hands free, cause me to embrace your knees. I have but three requests to make. I wish my watch to be given to her who is dearest to me on earth—Mary Danvers; my quadrant and other matters to my friend Jenkins, who sails in the ship *Enterprise* now lying in the river; and my last request is, that, with the ten guineas belonging to me, and now in the possession of the purser, a stone may be placed upon my mother's grave—which Mary Danvers will point out—with these words chiselled upon it—

TO THE MEMORY

OF THE

AMIABLE AND UNFORTUNATE

MATILDA STANLEY.

BY DESIRE OF HER UNFORTUNATE SON.

"'Matilda Stanley!' exclaimed Captain Sherbourne, in a tone of agitation, 'was that the name of your mother?'

"'It was, your honour,' replied William, 'and there were few such mothers.'

"'And your father!—your father!' repeated the captain with increased agitation; 'what knew you of him?'

"'Alas! nothing!' exclaimed the prisoner bitterly, and the tears gushed down his cheeks; 'but, oh, recall not to my memory in a moment like this—recall not my mother's ——No! no! my sainted mother.'

"'O conscience! conscience!' exclaimed the captain, and starting to his feet, and gasping in eagerness as he spoke. 'One question more—and your mother's father was a dissenting clergyman in the village of——name,—name the place, on that depends your life, and my happiness or misery.'

"'In the village of —— in Westmoreland,' replied William; 'but he survived not his daughter's broken heart. You knew them, then? Oh, did you know my father?'

"'My son! my son! come to a father's heart,' exclaimed the captain, springing forward and falling on his neck; '*I am your father!* Shade of my wronged Matilda! look on this!'

"'My father!' exclaimed William, 'have I found him? and in such an hour? But, if you loved my mother, wherefore——'

"'Upbraid me not, my son,' interrupted the captain, 'mingle not gall with my cup of joy. Your mother was my wife—my first, my only one. Circumstances forced me to exact a promise from her, that our marriage should be concealed until I dared to acknowledge it, and long captivity severed me from her; until, on my return, I could obtain no trace of either of you. How I have mourned for her, all who now stand beside me have been the daily witnesses. My son! my son!'

"'My father! O my father!' exclaimed William; 'but at this moment you are also my judge.'

"'No, no!' cried the captain. 'Seamen, strike off the fetters from your commander's son. Rigby, at another tribunal I will be surety for the appearance of my son.'

"The fetters were struck off from William's hands and feet, and officers and men burst simultaneously into three times three, loud, long, and hearty cheers.

"The boatswain, fearing that a worse thing might come upon him, fell on his knees before the captain, and made a full confession of his shameful intrigue with Squire Wates, and begged forgiveness, as his kidnapping of William had been the means of finding the commander his son. The rascal was forgiven, but dismissed the frigate.

"But I must return to poor Mary. She was sitting beside her father in the prison, when he addressed her, saying—'Come, come, child, thou saidst thou wouldst sing and read to me, and is this thy singing—nothing but sighing and tears? I'm saying, is this thy promised singing, daughter?—but it is perhaps the fittest singing for a jail.'

"'Ah, father!' said Mary, 'you know I would not willingly add to your sorrows. But can you forbid me to weep for him, who, from childhood, has been to me as a brother—whom I have long regarded as a husband, and who, *for my sake*, must in a few hours die as the vilest criminal?'

"'Why, I'm saying, daughter,' said old Danvers, 'let us have no more about it. I'm as sorry for Bill Stanley as thou canst be for thy life. But I say, girl, they can expect no better who fly in the face of a father. I am sure we have distress enough of our own, if we would only think about it, without meddling with that of other people's. Is it not bad enough that thy father is shut up here within these iron bars, and perhaps thou and thy mother will be driven to beg upon the streets, when thou mightest have been riding in thy carriage. I'm saying, is not this misery enough, without thy crying about what thou hast nothing to do with? Why, Mary, thou mayest be thankful thou ain't his wife.' 'Father! father!' she said, wringing her hands together, 'murmur not at our lot, nor upbraid me with sympathising in misery to which yours is mercy. What are the sufferings of want compared with what I now feel? To save him I could smile and be happy, though doomed to beg and kiss the foot that spurned me from them."

"The sheriff's officer and Mrs. Danvers at this moment entered, and the latter rushed towards her husband, exclaiming—'O husband! husband! the worst is come at

last! They have seized house and all!—and, Mary, thou and I are left without a roof to cover us. Thou hast no home now, hinny! Your father is shut up in this filthy prison, and your mother never knew what misery was till now.'

"'Wife! wife!' cried old Danvers, 'what dost thou say?—seized the house too!—and my wife and daughter driven to the streets! O wife!—I say I wish I had never been born! Mary! Mary, love! what wilt thou do now?'

"'Do not, my dear parents,' said Mary, 'repine at the hand of Providence. He who clothes the lily, and feeds the fowls of the air, will not permit us to perish in the midst of Christians.'

"'Daughter! daughter!' cried her mother, 'thou little knowest what a hard-hearted and wicked world we live in! Humanity and honesty, and everything that is good, have gone out of it. The world was not so when I knew it first.'

"'Well! well!' cried old Danvers; 'if the world be as bad as you say it is, it is one comfort that I shall not be long in it; for I cannot live to know that my wife and child are beggars, and that I am a prisoner, starving in a jail.'

"At this moment, Wates entered the room, and addressing Mr. Danvers, said—'I have but this morning heard of your misfortunes, Mr. Danvers, and have not lost a moment in hastening to offer my assistance. To your daughter I now offer my hand, my fortune, and my heart; and let her but say she will accept them, and this day ends your imprisonment.'

"'There, old woman!' exclaimed Mr. Danvers, in ecstasy, 'what dost thou and our daughter think of that? Did I not say that Mr. Wates meant marriage, and nothing but marriage—and was not I right? Thou shalt have her, sir, with a father's blessing, and I will pray for thee the longest day I have to live. Fall on thy knees, mother Danvers—fall on thy knees, and thank the kind, good, generous gentleman. Daughter, why dost thou stand there and say nothing? Did I not always say thou wert born to be a lady?'

"'For the sake of human nature, Mr. Wates,' said Mary, 'I will suppose that your intentions are now honourable. I will believe that you mean kindly, that you are willing to assist my parents, and rescue them from their distress. But, could I even forget the past—could I forget that for many months you have sought my destruction, and have striven to make me become that which would have made me to be despised in my own eyes, and an outcast in those of others—if, sir, I could even forget these things, I could not give my hand to one whom my heart has been accustomed to detest. For your offered kindness I would thank you with tears, but I can only repay you with gratitude. If, however, your assistance to my parents is only to be procured through my consenting to your wishes, they must remain as they now are, until it shall please Providence to send them a more disinterested deliverer. Betwixt us there is a gulf fixed that shall ever divide us—it is death and aversion—therefore, think not of me.'

"'Daughter!' cried the old man wrathfully, 'hast thou taken leave of thy senses altogether?'

"'Come, Mary, love,' said her mother; 'now that poor William must be no more, and that Mr. Wates means honourably, be not obstinate—do not suffer your father to die in a place like this, and your mother to beg upon the streets.'

"'Mother!' cried Mary, vehemently, 'with the last of my blood will I toil for your support; but speak not of that man to me. Keep, sir, your wealth for one to whom it may have attractions, and to whom you have never offered dishonour. I despise it, and I despise you; and this shallow and cruel artifice will avail you nothing.'

"'Consent,' said Wates, 'and to-night our hands shall be united.'

"'Wife! wife!' cried the old man, 'we will humble ourselves at her feet; belike she won't see her father and mother weeping on their knees before her, and say to them die—!' And they knelt before her.

"'Rise! my parents!—rise!' she exclaimed; 'if ye would not have your daughter's blood upon your head. Monster,' she added, turning to Wates, 'can ye talk of marriage to

me, when he to whom my heart and vows are given, if he be not already dead, must in a few hours die a death of shame!'

"'And will you not save him?' said Wates, eagerly.

"'Save him!—how? how?' she cried.

"'Consent to be mine, and within an hour I shall procure his pardon,' said he.

"'Villain! villain! would you deceive me with the snare of the devil?' she exclaimed.

"'I swear it,' he answered.

"'Save him! save him!' she exclaimed wildly; but again cried suddenly—'No! no!—wretch, ye mock me!'

"'Yes, he mocks you, Mary,' said Jack Jenkins, who had just entered. 'I could find in my heart to kick the old murderer through these iron gratings; for I know it is all through him that poor Bill must, before the sun go down, lose his life.

"While Jack was speaking, the locks of the prison-doors were again heard creaking, and in rushed William, his father, and the officers of the frigate, and they dragged the rascal Rigby along with them.

"There was a cry of 'Mary!' 'William!' and a rush to meet each other. But the best scene was the confusion of Wates, when his brother knave exposed his villany; and Captain Sherbourne ordering them to be gone, Jack Jenkins rushed after them, for the pleasure of kicking them down the prison stairs; but Bill, catching him by the arm, said—'Messmate, let me introduce you to *my father*.'

"'*Your father!*' exclaimed Mary; and it would have been hard to say which of the two was nearest fainting. They left the prison together, old Danvers and all; and Mary and Bill were soon spliced. They were the happiest couple alive. He rose to be post captain; and I hope yet to see him an admiral. So, gentlemen, that's an end to my yarn."

"But," inquired the company, "what became of Jack Jenkins?" "Why, I am Jack Jenkins," answered he; "sail-master, with half pay of five and sixpence a-day, besides two shillings as interest for prize-money—thanks to my old friend Bill."

THE RECOLLECTIONS OF A VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

THERE is no feeling more strongly or more generally implanted in the human breast, than man's love for the place of his nativity. The shivering Icelander sees a beauty, that renders them pleasant, in his mountains of perpetual snow; and the sun-burnt Moor discovers a loveliness in his sultry and sandy desert. The scenes of our nativity become implanted on our hearts like the memory of undying dreams; and with them the word *home* is for ever associated, and

> "Through pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
> Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

We cannot forget the place where our eyes first looked upon the glorious sun; where the moon was a thing of wonder, the evening companion of our childish gambols, joining with us in the race, and flying through the heavens as we ran! where we first listened to the song of the lark, received the outpourings of a mother's love upon our neck, or saw a father's eyes sparkle with joy as he beheld his happy children around him; where we first breathed affection's tale or heard its vows, and perchance were happy, wretched, blest, or distracted, within a short hour. There is a magic influence about nativity that the soul loves to cherish. Its woods, its rivers, its hills, its old memories fling their shadows and associations after us and over us, even to the ends of the earth; and while these whisper of our early joys, or of what we fancied to be care ere we knew what care was—its churchyard tells us we have a portion there—that there our brethren and kindred sleep. We may be absent from it until our very name is forgotten; yet we love

it not the less. The man who loves it not, hath his affections "dark as Erebus." It is a common wish, and it hath patriotism in it too, that where we drew our first breath, there also we should breathe our last. Yet in this world of changes and vicissitudes, such is not the lot of many. While I thus moralize, however, I detain the reader from the Recollections of the Village Patriarch; and as some of the individuals mentioned in his reminiscences may be yet living, I shall speak of the place in which he dwelt, as the village of A——.

The name of the patriarch was Roger Rutherford—he was in many respects a singular old man. He was the proprietor of three or four cottages, and of some thirty acres of arable land adjoining to them. He was a man of considerable reading, of some education, and much shrewdness. His years at the period we speak of, were fourscore and four. By general consent, he was a sort of home-made magistrate in the village, and the umpire in all the disputes which arose amongst his neighbours. It was common with them to say, instead of going to law—"We will leave the matter to old Roger;" and the patriarch so managed or balanced his opinions that he generally succeeded in pleasing both parties. He was also the living or walking history, or chronicle, of the village. He could record all the changes that had taken place in it for more than seventy years; and he could speak of all the ups and downs of its inhabitants. What Byron beautifully says of the ocean—

"Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow,"

might have been said of the memory and intellect of the patriarch. He had also a happy art of telling his village tales, which rendered it pleasant to listen to the old man.

It was in the month of August, 1830, and just before the crops were ready for the sickle, old Roger was sitting, as his custom was (when the weather permitted), enjoying his afternoon pipe on a stone seat at the door, when a genteel-looking stranger, who might be about fifty years of age, approached him, and entered into conversation with him. The stranger asked many questions concerning the village and its old inhabitants, and Roger, eyeing him attentively for the space of a minute, said—"Weel, ye seem to ken something about the town, but I cannot charge my memory with having the

smallest recollection o' ye; however, sit down, and I will inform ye concerning whatever ye wish to hear."

So the stranger sat down beside the patriarch, on the stone seat by the door, and he mentioned to him the circumstances respecting which he wished to be informed, and the individuals concerning whom he wished to learn tidings. And thus did the old man narrate his recollections, and the tales of

THE VILLAGE.

"I have often thought, sir," he began, "that A—— is one of the bonniest towns on all the Borders—indeed, I may say in all broad Scotland. I dinna suppose ye will find its marrow in England; and I dinna say this through any prejudice in its favour or partiality towards it, because I was born in it, and have lived in it now for the better part o' fourscore and four years; but I will leave your own eyes to be the judge. It is as clean as the hearth-stane o' a tidy wife—and there certainly is a great improvement in it, in this respect, since I first knew it. There is the bit garden before almost every door, wi' vegetables in the middle, flowers alang the edges, a pear or cherry tree running up the side o' the house, and the sweet, bonny brier mixing wi' the hedges round about. It lies just in the bosom of the woods, too, in the centre of a lovely haugh, where the river soughs along, like the echo of the cooing of the cushats in the plantations. The population is four times what it was when I remember it first, and there are but few of the old, original residenters left. There have been a great many alterations, changes, and improvements in it, since I first kenned it; but young folk will have young fashions, and it is of no use talking to them. The first inroad upon our ancient and primitive habits, was made by one Lucky Riddle taking out a license to sell whisky and tippeny, and other liquors. She hadna carried on the trade for six months, until a great alteration was observable in the morals o' several in the parish. It was a sad heart-sore to our worthy minister. He once spoke to me of having Lucky Riddle summoned before the session. But says I to him—'Sir, I am afraid it is a case in which the session cannot interfere. Ye see she has out a king's license, and she is contributing to what they call the revenue o' the country;

therefore, if she be only acting up to her regulations, I doubt we canna interfere, and that we would only bring ourselves into trouble if we did.'

"'But, Roger,' quoth he, 'her strong drink is making weak vessels of some of my parishioners. There is Thomas Elliot, and William Archbold, or Blithe Willie, as some call him for a by-word; those lads, and a dozen o' others, I am creditably informed, are there, drinking, singing, swearing, fighting, or dancing, night after night; and even Johnny Grippy, the miser, that I would have made an elder last year but on account o' his penuriousness, is said to slip in on the edge o' his foot every morning, to swallow his dram before breakfast! I tell ye, Roger, she is bringing them to ruin faster than I can bring them to a sense o' sin—or whatever impression I may make, her liquor is washing away. She has brought a plague amongst us, and it is entering our habitations, it is thinning the sanctuary, striking down our strong men and making mothers miserable. Therefore, unless Lucky Riddle will, in the meantime, relinquish her traffic, I think we ought, in duty, to prohibit her from coming forward on the next half yearly occasion.'

"I was perfectly aware that there was a vast deal o' truth in what the minister said, but I thought he was carrying the case to a length that couldna be justified; and I advised him to remember that he was a minister o' the gospel, but not of the law. So all proceedings against Mrs. Riddle were stopped, and her business went on, doing much injury to the minds, bodies, purses, and families, of many in the village.

"It was nae great secret that there were folk, both in and about the town, that had small stills concealed and working about their premises, and that there wasna a night but they sent gallons o' spirits owre the hills into England; but, by some means or other, government got wit of these clandestine transactions, and the consequence was, that a gauger was sent to live in the village, and three armed soldiers were billeted on the inhabitants, who had to provide beds for them week about. Naebody cared for having men wi' swords and fire-arms in their house, and they preferred paying for their bed at Lucky Riddle's. They were regarded as spies, and their appearance caused a great commotion amongst young and old. I often feared that the spirit of murmuring would break

out into open rebellion; and one morning the soldiers came down from the hills, carrying the gauger covered wi' blood, and in a state that ye could hardly ken life in him. One o' the soldiers also was dreadfully bruised about the head, and his sword was broken through the middle. They acknowledged that they had had a terrible battle wi' a party o' smugglers, and rewards were offered for their apprehension. But, though many of our people were then making rapid strides towards depravity, there was none of them so depraved as to sell his neighbour, as Judas did his master, for a sum of money. None o' us had any great doubts as to who had been in the ploy, and some o' our folk werena seen for months after; and, when inquiries were made concerning them, their friends said they were in England, or the dear kens where—places where they could have no more business than wi' the man o' the moon—but when they came back, some o' them were lamiters for life.

"The next improvement, as they called it, was the building of a strong, square, flat-roofed house, like a castle in miniature, wi' an iron-stancheled window, and an oak door that might have resisted the attack o' a battering-ram. This was intended to be a place of confinement for disorderly persons. A constable was appointed to take care of it, and it often furnished some of Lucky Riddle's customers with a night's lodgings. Persons guilty of offences were also confined there, until they could be removed to the county jail.

"The next thing that followed, certainly was an improvement, but it had its drawbacks. It was the erection of a woollen manufactory, in which a great number o' men, women, and bairns, were employed. But they were mostly strangers; for our folk were ignorant of the work, and the proprietor of the factory brought them someway from the west of England. The auld residenters were swallowed up in the influx of new comers. But it caused a great stir about the town, and gave the street quite a new appearance. The factory hadna commenced three months, when a rival establishment was set up in opposition to Lucky Riddle, and one public-house followed upon the back of another, until now we have ten of them. As a matter of course, there was a great deal more money spent in the village; and several young lads belonging to it, that had served their time as shopkeepers in the county town,

came and commenced business in it, some of them beneath their father's roof, and enlarging the bit window o' six panes —where their mother had exposed thread, biscuits, and gingerbread for sale—into a great bow-window that projected into the street, they there exhibited for sale all that the eye could desire for dress, or the palate to pet it. Yet with an increase of trade and money, there also came an increase of crime and a laxity of morals, and vices became common among both sexes that were unheard of in my young days. Nevertheless, the evil did not come without a degree of good to counterbalance it; and in course of time, besides the kirk, the handsome dissenting meeting house that ye would observe at the foot of the town was built. Four schools, besides the parish school, also sprang up, so that every one had education actually brought to their door; but opposition at that time (which was very singular), instead of lowering, raised the price o' schooling, and he that charged highest got the genteelest school. Then both the kirk and the meeting-house got libraries attached to them, and Luckie Riddle found the libraries by far the most powerful opposition she had had to contend wi'. Some of the youngsters, also, formed what they called a Mechanics' Institution, and they also got a library, and met for instruction after work hours; and, I declare to ye, that even callants in a manner became so learned, that I often had great difficulty to keep my ground wi' them; and I have actually heard some of them have the impudence to tell the dominie that taught them their letters, that he was utterly ignorant of all useful learning, and that he knew nothing o' the properties of either chemistry or mechanics. When I was a youth also, I dinna ken if there was a person in the village, save the minister, kenned what a newspaper was. Politics never were heard tell of until about the year 'seventy-five or 'eighty, but, ever since then, they have been more and more discussed until now they have divided the whole town into parties, and keep it in a state of perpetual ferment; and now there are not less than five newspapers come from London by the post every day, besides a score of weekly ones on the Saturday. Ye see, sir, that even in my time, very great changes and improvements have taken place; and I am free to give it as my opinion, that society is more intellectual now, than it was when I first kenned it; and, upon the whole,

I would say, that mankind, instead of degenerating, are improving. I recollect, that even the street there ye couldna get across it in the winter season, without lairing knee-deep in a dub; and now ye see it is all what they call Macadamized, and as firm, dry, and durable as a sheet of iron. In fact, sir, within the last forty years, the improvements and changes in this village alone are past all belief—and the alterations in the place are nothing to what I have seen and heard of the ups and downs, and vicissitudes of its inhabitants."

The patriarch having finished his account of the village, thus proceeded with the history of the individuals after whom the stranger had inquired.

THE LAIRD.

"Ye have asked me if auld Laird Cochrane be still living at the Ha', which, for three centuries, was the glory and pride of his ancestors. Listen, sir, and ye shall hear concerning him. He was born and brought up amongst us, and for many years he was a blessing to this part of the country. The good he did was incalculable. He was owner of two thousand acres of as excellent land as ye would have found on all the Borders; and I could have defied any man to hear a poor mouth made throughout the whole length and breadth of his estate. His tenants were all happy, weel-to-do, and content. There wasna a murmur amongst them, nor amongst all his servants. He was a landlord among ten thousand. He was always devising some new scheme or improvement to give employment to the poor; and he would as soon have thought of taking away his own life as distressing a tenant. But the longest day has an end, and so had the goodness and benevolence of Laird Cochrane.

"It will be eight-and-twenty years ago, just about this present time, that he took a sort of back-going in his health, and somebody got him advised to go to a place in the south, that they call Tunbridge Wells—one of the places where people, that can afford annually to have fashionable complaints, go to drink mineral waters. He would then be about fifty-two years of age; and the distress of both auld and young in the village was very great at his departure. Men,

women, and children, accompanied him a full mile from the porter's lodge, and when his carriage drove away, there was not one that didna say—'Heaven bless you!' On the Sabbath, also, our minister, Mr. Anderson, prayed for him very fervidly.

"Weel, we heard no more about the laird, nor how the waters agreed wi' his stomach, for the space of about two months, when, to our surprise, a rumour got abroad, that he was on the eve of being married. Some folk laughed at the report, and made light of it; but I did no such thing, for I remembered the proverb, that—'An auld fool is the worst of all fools.' But, to increase our astonishment, cart-loads of furniture, and numbers of upholsterers, arrived from Edinburgh, and the house-keeper and butler received orders to have everything in readiness, in the best manner, for the reception of their new leddy! There was nothing else talked about in the village for a fortnight, and, I believe, nothing else dreamed about. A clap of thunder bursting out on a new year's morning, ushering in the year, and continuing for a day without intermission, could not have surprised us more. There were several widows and auld maids in the parish, that the laird allowed so much a year to, and their dinner every Sunday and Wednesday, from the Ha' kitchen, and they, poor creatures, were in very great distress about the matter. They were principally auld or feckless people, and they were afraid that if their benefactor should stop his bounty, that they would be left to perish. Whether they judged by their own dispositions or not, it is not for me to say; but certain it is, that one and all of them were afraid that his marrying a wife would put an end both to their annuities and the dinners which they received twice a week from his kitchen.

"I dinna suppose that there was a great deal the matter wi' the laird when he went to Tunbridge Wells—like many others he wasna weel from having owre little to do. But he had not been there many days, when his fancy was attracted by a dashing young leddy, of four or five-and twenty, the daughter of a gentleman who was a dignitary in the church, but who lived up to and rather beyond his income, so that when he should die, his gay family, of whom he had four daughters, would be left penniless.

The name of the laird's intended was Jemima, and she certainly was a pretty woman, and what ye would call a handsome one; but there was a haughtiness about her looks, and a boldness in her carriage, that were far from being becoming in a woman. Her looks and carriage, however, were not her worst fault. She had been taken to the Wells by her mamma, as she termed her mother, for the express purpose of being exhibited—much after the same manner as cattle are exhibited at a fair—to see whether any bachelor or widower would make proposals. Our good laird was smitten, sighed, was accepted, and sealed the marriage contract.'

"The marriage took place immediately, but he didna arrive at the Ha' wi' his young wife till the following June. When they did arrive, her father, the divine, was wi' them, and within a week there was a complete overturning of the whole establishment, from head to foot. They came in two speck-and-span-new carriages, shining like the sun wi' silver ornaments. They brought also a leddy's maid wi' them, that wore her veils, and her frills, and her fal-de-rals; and the housekeeper declared, that for the first eight days, she didna ken her mistress from the maid; for Miss imitated Madam, and both took such airs upon themselves, that the auld body was confounded, and curtsied to both without distinction, for fear of making a mistake. They also brought a man-servant wi' them, that couldna speak a word like a Christian, nor utter a word but in some heathenish foreign tongue. Within a week the auld servants were driven about from the right hand to the left, and from the left to the right. The incomers ordered them to do this, and to do that, wi' as much insolence and authority, at if he had been a lord and she a lady.

"But, in a short time, the leddy discovered that all th auld domestics, from the housekeeper and butler down to the scullion wench, some of whom had been in the house for twenty years, were little better than a den of thieves; and, at the Martinmas term, a new race of servants took possession of the Ha'. But this was not the only change which her young leddyship and her father brought about in afew weeks. Her nerves could not stand the smell of vegetables, which arose from the kitchen when the broth was cooling

for the widows and their familes, the auld maidens, and other helpless persons in the village and neighbourhood, on the Sundays and Wednesdays, and she gave orders that the nuisance should be discontinued. Thus, sir, for the sake of the gentility and delicacy of her ladyship's organ of smelling, forty stomachs were left twice a week to yearn with hunger. At that time the labouring men on the estate had seven shillings a week, with liberty to keep a cow to graze in the plantations; and those that dwelt by the river-side kept ducks and geese, all of which were great helps to them. But her leddyship had an aversion to horned cattle. She never saw them, she said, but she dreamed of them, and to dream of them was to dream of an enemy! The laird endeavoured to laugh her out of such silly notions, and appealed to her father, the dignitary and divine, to prove that belief in dreams was absurd. His reverence agreed that it was ridiculous to place faith in dreams, but he hinted that there were occasions when the wishes of a wife, though a little extravagant, and perhaps absurd, ought to be complied with; and he also stated, that he himself had seen the cattle in question rubbing against the young trees, and nibbling the tender twigs; besides, there were walks through the plantations, and as there might be running cattle amongst them, he certainly thought, with his daughter, that the grazing in the woods ought to be discontinued. His authority was decisive. Next day, the steward was commanded to issue an order that every cotter upon the estate must either sell his cow, or pay for its grass to a farmer.

"This was a sad blow to the poor hedgers and ditchers, and those that work with the spade. There was mourning that day in many a cottage—it was equal to taking a meal a day off every family. But the change that was taking place in their condition did not end there. The divine, like another great and immortal member of the sacred profession—the illustrious Paley—was fond of angling; but there the resemblance between them stopped. I have said that he was fond of angling—but he was short-sighted, and one of the worst fishers that ever cracked off a hook, or raised a splash in the water. Once, when he might have preached on the text, that he 'had toiled all day and caught nothing,' he was fishing on the river, about a mile above where we now are, when he

perceived the geese and ducks of a cottager, swimming and diving their heads in the stream. It immediately occurred to the wise man, that his want of success arose from the geese and ducks destroying all the fish!—and he forthwith prevailed upon his son-in-law to order his tenants to part with their poultry. This was another sair blow to the poor cottagers, and was the cause of their bairns gaun bare-legged in winter, and hungry in summer. The gardens, the avenues, the lodge, everything about the place was altered. But to crown all, the lease of three or four of the laird's tenants was out at the following Martinmas, and their rents were doubled. Every person marvelled at the change in the conduct and character of the laird. Some thought he had gone out of his wits, and others that he was possessed by the Evil One; but the greater part thought, like me, that he was a silly, henpecked man.

"A few months after her leddyship arrived, she gave birth to a son and heir, and there were great rejoicings about the Ha' on the occásion, but very little upon the estate; for already it had become a place that every one saw it would be desirable to leave as soon as possible. As the young birkie grew up, he soon gave evidence of being a sad scapegrace. Never a day passed but we heard of his being in some ploy or other, and his worthy mother said, that it showed a spirit becoming his station in life. Before he had reached man's estate, he was considered to be a great proficient in horse-racing, cock-fighting, fox-hunting, gambling, and other gentlemanly amusements; but as to learning, though he had been both at school and college, I dinna suppose that there is a trade's lad connected wi' the Mechanics' Institution here, that he was fit to haud the candle to. His grandfather, the divine, sometimes lectured him about the little attention which he paid to his learning, but the young hopeful answered, that—'There was no necessity for a gentleman who was heir to five or six thousand a year, and whose father was seventy years of age, boring over books.'

"They generally resided in London, and were never about the Ha', save during a month or two in the shooting season. We heard, however, that they had fine carryings on in the great city; that they kept up a perpetual course of routs, parties, and assemblies—that the estate was deeply mortgaged;

and the laird, from the course of dissipation into which he had been dragged, had sunk into premature dotage. It was even reported, that Johnny Grippy, the miser, had advanced several thousand pounds upon the estate, at a very exorbitant interest.

"At length their course of extravagance, like a lang tether, came to an end. Creditors grew numerous and clamorous; they would have their money and nothing but their money would satisfy them. The infatuated auld laird sought refuge in the abbey at Holyrood; and his son went on racing about and gambling as formerly, borrowing money from John Grippy when down here, and from Jews when in London, and giving them promises and securities that would make the estate disappear, when it came into his possession, like snow in summer. Her leddyship came down to the Ha', and, to my certain knowledge, was refused credit for twenty shillings in a shop in the village here, which was then kept by a son of one of the cotters, that she and her father had caused to part wi' their kye and their poultry. This was what the young man called—'seeing day about wi' her leddyship.'

"The auld laird hadna been twelve months in the Abbey, when, finding himself utterly deserted by his wife and son, he sank into despondency, and died in misery; rueing, I will make free to say, that ever he had set his foot in Tunbridge Wells. His young successor, in gratitude to his mother for her over indulgence, and the example she had set him, turned her from the Ha' on his taking possession of it, and left her to seek refuge in the house of her father the divine; and we never heard of her in this part of the country again. The career and end of the young laird I will state to ye, as I notice the histories of the Minister, and Ne'er do-weel Tam. And now for that of

THE MINISTER.

"A more excellent, worthy, and sincere man than Mr. Anderson, never entered a pulpit, or preached words of hope and consolation to sinners. He was not a flowery orator, or a fashionable preacher; but he was plain, simple, nervous, earnest. His homeliness and anxious sincerity, riveted

the attention of the most thoughtless; and, as a poet says—

'They who came to scoff, remained to pray.'

I remember when he was first placed among us as minister of the parish, he was a mere youngster, but as primitive in his manners, as if he had just come from the plough instead of a college. His faither was a farm steward upon the estate of the then member for the county; and the patronage being in the crown —as it is called—it was through the interest of the member that he got the kirk. About twelve months after he was placed, he took a wife, and his marriage gave great satisfactiou to the whole congregation, at least to the poor and middle classes, who, of course, were the great majority. And the reason why his marriage gave such satisfaction was, that his wife was the daughter of a poor hind, that he had taken a liking to, when he was but a laddie and her a lassie; and he had promised her, when they came from the harvest field together (for while he was at the college, he always wrought in the harvest time), that, if he lived, and was spared to be a minister, she should be his wife. I am sorry to say that such promises are owre often neglected by young people, when either the one or the other of them happens to get their head up in the world. But our minister thereby showed, that his heart was actuated by right principles, and that he preferred happiness to every mercenary considera-tion. It showed, that he was desirous of domestic comfort, and not ambitious of worldly aggrandisement. She was a bonny, quiet, discreet creature; and, if she hadna what ye may call the manners of a leddy, yet her modesty and good nature lent an air of politeness to everything she did. Her constant desire to please, far more than counterbalanced for her want of being what is called weel-bred; and if she had not gentility, she had what is of more importance in a preacher's wife—a pious mind, a cheerful and charitable disposition and a meek spirit; and whatever she was ignorant of, there was one thing she was acquainted with—she

'Knew her Bible true.'

But, after their marriage, he took great pains in instructing her in various branches of learning; and in that she made great proficiency, I am qualified to give evidence—for, when I have been present at the dinners after the sacrament occasions, I have heard her dispute wi' the ministers upon points of divinity, history, and other matters, and maintain her ground very manfully, if I may say it.

"I believe that a happier couple were not to be found in Great Britain. She bore unto him fourteen children, but of these, all, save two, a boy and a girl, died in infancy; and, in giving birth to the last, the mother perished. It was on a Sunday that she died; and I remember that, on the following Sabbath, her widowed husband entered the pulpit to preach her funeral sermon. His text was—'Why should we mourn as those who have no hope?' He proceeded with his discourse but every few minutes he paused, he sobbed—the big tears ran down his cheeks, and all the congregation wept with him. At last he quoted the words —'In the morning I preached to the people, and in the evening my wife died!' His heart filled—the tears gushed from his eyes—he could say no more—he sank down on the seat, and covered his face with his hands. Two of the elders went up to the pulpit, and led him to the manse; and the precentor of his own accord, giving out a psalm, the congregation sang it and dispersed.

"I have mentioned to ye his two surviving bairns—the name of the laddie was Edward, and of the lassie Esther. Edward was several years older than his sister; and from his youth upwards, he was a bold, sprightly, fearless callant. Often have I observed him playing the part of a captain and drilling the laddies of the village into squares and lines, like a little army; and as often have I heard him say that he would be nothing but a sodger. His faither (as every Christian ought to do) regarded war as a great wickedness, and as an abomination that disgraced the earth; he, therefore, was grieved to see the military bent of his son's inclination, and did everything in his power to break him from it. He believed, and correctly too, that Edward had too much pride to enter the army as a common soldier, where he would be little better than a slave, and have to lift his hat to

every puppy that wore an epaulet on his shoulder or a sash round his waist. The minister, therefore, was resolved that he would not advance the money to buy his son a commission.

"Here I must notice Johnny Grippy, who had never been kenned to perform a generous action in the whole course of his existence. He was a man that, if he had parted wi' a bawbee, to save a fellow-creature from starvation, wadna, through vexation, have sleeped again for a week If ony body had pleaded poverty to him, he would have asked them—'What right they had to be poor?' It would have been more difficult for him to answer—'What right he had to be rich?' Johnny never forgave Mr. Anderson for prohibiting him from being made an elder; and in his own quiet, but cruel way, he said he would see that he got satisfaction, to the last plack, for the insult. Now what do ye think the miser did? He absolutely offered young Maister Edward money to buy an ensign's commission, at the moderate interest of ten per cent, and on the understanding that he would gie him four years' credit for the interest, and that he wadna request the principal until he was made a captain. This proposal was made for the sole and individual purpose of grieving and afflicting Mr. Anderson, and of being revenged on him. The silly laddie, dazzled wi' the bright sword, and the gold-laced coat of an officer, and thinking it a grand thing to be a soldier—fancying himself a general, a hero, a conqueror in a hundred fights—swallowed the temptation, took the offered money on the conditions agreed to; and through the assistance of a college acquaintance, the son of a member of parliament, purchased a commission in a foot-regiment. All this was done without his father's knowledge; and when John Grippy witnessed the good man's tears as he parted with his son, his cold heart rejoiced that his revenge had been so far successful, and for once he regretted not having parted with his money without a sure bond being made doubly sure.

"In a very few weeks after Edward Anderson joined his regiment, he accompanied it abroad; and twelve months had not passed, when the public papers contained an account of his having been promoted to the rank of lieutenant on the field, on account of his bravery.

"But, listen, sir, to what follows.—It was on our fast-day, that the news arrived concerning a great victory in the Indies. We were all interested in the tidings, and the more particularly as we knew that our minister's son was at the battle. His faither and his sister were in a state of great anxiety concerning him, for whether he was dead or living they could not tell. The weather was remarkably fine, and as a great preacher was to serve some of the tables, and preach during the afternoon's service, the kirk was crowded almost to suffocation, and it was found necessary to perform the ordinances in the open air. A green plot in front of the manse, was chosen for the occasion, and which was capable of accommodating two or three thousand people. It was a grand sight to see such a multitude sitting on the green sward, singing the praises of their Maker; wi' the great heavens aboon them for a canopy! its very glory and immensity rendering them incapable of appreciating its unspeakable magnificence, and rendering as less than the dust in the balance the temples of men's hands. It reminded me of the days of the Covenant, when the pulpit was a mountain side, and its covering a cloud. Mr. Anderson was a man whose very existence seemed linked wi' affection for his family. He had had great affection in it, and every death seemed to transfer the love that he had borne for the dead in a stronger degree towards those that were left. His soul was built up in them. All the congregation observed that he was greatly agitated various times during his discourse. It was evident to all, that apprehensions for the fate of his son were forcing themselves upon his thoughts.

"The postman at that time brought the letters from the next town every day about one o'clock. Mr. Anderson was serving the first table, and his face was towards the manse, when the postman, approaching the door, waved his hand towards Miss Esther, who sat near it, as much as to say that he had a letter from her brother. The faither's voice failed through agitation and anxiety, as he saw the letter in the postman's hand, and abruptly concluding his exhortation, he sat down trembling, while his eyes remained as if fixed upon the letter. I, myself, observed as the postman passed wi' it in his hand, that it was sealed wi' black. I regarded it as a fatal omen, and I at first looked towards the minister to see

whether he had observed it; but I believe that his eyes were so blinded wi' tears that he could not perceive it; and I then turned round towards Miss Esther, who I observed hastening to take the letter in her hand. At the sight of the black seal, she almost fainted upon the ground; and I saw the poor thing shaking as a leaf that quivers in the wind. But when, wi' a hurried and trembling hand, she had broken the seal, she hadna read three lines until the letter dropped upon the ground, and, clasping her hands together, wi' a wild, heart-piercing scream, that sounded wildly through the worship of the people, she exclaimed, 'My brother! my brother!' and fell wi' her face upon the ground. The spectators raised her in their arms. Her father's heart could hold no longer. He rushed through the multitude—he snatched up the fatal letter. It bore the post-mark of Bengal, but it was not the handwriting of his son. He, too, seemed to read but a line, when he smote his hand upon his forehead, and exclaimed in agony, 'My son! my son! my poor Edward!'

"His gallant boy was one of those who were slain and buried upon the field; and the letter, which was from his colonel, recorded his courage, his virtues, and his death! All the people rose, and sorrow and sympathy seemed on every countenance save one—and that was the face of the auld miser and hypocrite, Johnny Grippy. The body seemed actually to glut, wi' a malicious delight, over the misery and affliction of which he, in a measure, had been the cause; and, though he did try to screw his mouth into a form of pity or compassion, and sqeeezed his een together to make them water, I more than once observed the twittering streak of satisfaction and delight pass owre his cheeks just as ye have seen the shadow of a swift cloud pass owre a field of waving grain. I hated the auld miser for his very looks and his attempted hypocrisy; and, forgive me for saying so, but I believe, if at that moment it had been in my power to have annihilated him, I would have done it. The man who does the work of iniquity openly or through error, I would pray for; but he that does it beneath the mask of virtue or religion, I would exterminate.

"It was many weeks before Mr. Anderson was able to resume his place in the pulpit again; and his daughter, also,

took the death of her brother greatly to heart. The whole parish sought to condole wi' them, not even excepting young Laird Cochrane of the Ha', who had not then come to the estate. I firmly believe, sir, that he was a predestinated villain from his cradle, for he showed symptoms of the most disgusting depravity more early than ever laddie did. The aulder he grew, when he was in the country, he went the more about the manse, and Esther was nearly about his own age. She was a lassie that I would call the very perfection of loveliness—simple, artless, confiding, but not without a sprinkling o' woman's vanity. There was a laddie, the son of Thomas Elliot, or Neer-do-weel Tam, as he was commonly called, that was very fond of her; he was a fine, deserving callant, and all the town thought that she was fond of him. But the young laird put himself forward as his rival, and the one was rich and the other poor. The laird of the Ha' sent daily presents of geese, turkies, and all sorts of game in their season to the manse; and he also presented rings, trinkets, and other fine things to Esther; while the other, who was considered a sort of poet in the neighbourhood, could only say, as a sang that I hear them singing now-a-days says—

> 'My heart and lute are all my store,
> And these I bring to thee.'

The laird was also an adept in flattery, in its most cunningly devised forms. Now, sir, it is amazing what an effect the use of such means will ultimately produce on the best regulated minds. They are like the constant dropping that weareth away a stone. Though unconscious of it herself, Esther, who was but a young thing, began to listen with more patience to the addresses of the heir of the Ha'; and she occasionally exhibited something like dryness and petulance in the presence of poor Alexander Elliot—for such was his name. At the very first shadow of change upon her countenance, his spirit became bitter wi' jealousy, and he rashly charged her wi' deserting him for the sake of the young laird and the estate to which he was heir. This was a tearing asunder of the silken cords, that for years had held their hearts together. He was proud, and so was she—they became distrustful of each other, and at length they quarrelled, and

parted never to meet again. I have heard it said, that it was partly to be revenged on Alexander, that Esther gave an ear to the addresses of the laird: but that is a subject on which I offer no opinion. All that I know is, that Alexander enlisted, and went out to join his regiment in the West Indies. The laird followed Esther like her shadow; and every one, save myself, said that there would be a marriage between them. Even her worthy faither seemed to dream in the golden delusion; and, I am sorry to say, that I believe he was in no small degree the cause of finally breaking off the intimacy between her and Alexander Elliot. She was, as I have informed ye, a sensitive, confiding lassie; and the laird, who had a honied tongue, succeeded not only, in the long run, in gaining her affections, but in making her to believe in his very looks; for, being incapable of falsehood herself, she did not suspect it in others, and least of all in those who had obtained a place in her heart.

"The young villain went so far as, in her presence, to ask her faither's consent to their marriage; and the auld laird being then dead, the minister agreed. It was not long after this that the scapegrace went to London, and Esther began tc droop like a flower nipped wi' a frost. Half a dozen times in the day her faither found her in tears, and he endeavoured to comfort and to cheer her; but his efforts were unavailing. It pained his heart, which had already been sorely chastened by affliction, to behold the youngling and last of his flock, pining away before him. The young laird neither returned nor wrote, and he suspected not the cause of his daughter's grief. The first hint he got of it, was from his elders assembled in session. The old man in agony, fell back—he gasped, he smote his breast, and tore his grey hairs. In his agony he cried that his Maker had forsaken him! The elders sought to condole wi' him, but it was in vain; he was carried to the manse, and he never preached more His heart was broken, and before a month passed, the thread of life snapped also.

"Wi' the weight of her own shame and sorrow, and her faither's death, poor Esther became dementit. About nine weeks after her faither's funeral, she gave birth to a still-born child; and it was a happy thing, that the infant and its mother were buried at the same time, in the same grave.

"Such, sir, is all that is necessary for me to inform ye concerning our late worthy minister; and, of the young laird, ye shall hear more presently, in the history of

NE'ER-DO-WEEL TAM.

"I never kenned a lad that I entertained a higher regard for than Thomas Elliot. His faither left him fifteen hundred pounds, laid out upon a mortgage at five per cent. interest, and bequeathed in such a way, that he couldna lift the principal. There was a vast deal of real goodness about his heart—he was frank, liberal, sincere. Every person that kenned him liked him. His first and greatest fault was, that he was owre open; he laid bare his breast, as it were, to the attack of every enemy that chose to hurl a shaft at it. He was a fool for his pains; and, I daresay, he saw it in the end. There was always some person taking the advantage of the frankness of his disposition. But the thing that ruined him, and fixed the bye-name on him was, that he became a sort of fixture in Luckie Riddle's parlour. His chief companion was a lad of the name of William Archbold,—a blithe, singing chield, that was always happy, and ready at onything. Thomas and he were courting two sisters—Peggy and Jenny Lilly—the daughters of a small farmer in the neighbourhood, and both of them were bonny, weel respected lasses. The folk in this quarter used to call William Archbold, Blithe Willie. He was a blacksmith to his trade, but quite a youth; and come upon him by night or by day, Willie was sure to be found laughing, whistling, or singing. He hadna a yearly income like Thomas Elliot; and, strange to say, he got the blame of gieing him a howff at Luckie Riddle's. But that was a doctrine which I always protested against; and I said it was much more likely that, as Thomas was fu' handed, while his neighbour had to work for his bread, that the man of money led the blacksmith to their howff, and not the blacksmith the man of money. One thing is certain, that both of them were far oftener at Luckie's than was either good for their health, wealth, or reputation. One night, it seems, after having drunk until, if 'they were-na fu', they just had plenty,' they reeled away to see the two sisters, their sweethearts. Jenny didna wish to quarrel wi'

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Thomas, because he had the siller; but Peggy turned away wi' scorn from Blithe William, and said that she 'never again would speak to one who was no better than a common blackguard, and who neither had regard for himself, nor for any one connected wi' him.' What more passed between them I cannot tell, but it is said he turned sober in an instant; and certain it is, that night he left the town, and has never been more heard tell of.

"Thomas Elliot and Jenny were married, but she died the second year after their marriage, leaving to his charge an infant son, who was kirsened by the name of Alexander. Thomas, after his wife's death, tried many things (for while she lived she keepit him to rights), but he neglected them all. He began twenty things and ended nothing. He was to be found in Luckie Riddle's in the morning, and he was to be seen sitting there at night. Before he was forty, he became a perfect sot; and I used to ask—'Wha leads him away now?' The fact was, he was miserable save when he was in company; and, for the sake of company, he would have sat sipping and drinking from sunrise to sunset, without ever perceiving that in that time he had been sitting wi' twenty different companies, each of whom had remained maybe half an hour, and left him bibbing there to make a crony of the customer that last came in. But this course of life could not last long. He had mortgaged the mortgage that his father left him, until, although he could not lift it, he had almost swallowed it up; and at the age of forty-four he fell into the grave like a lump of diseased flesh—a thing without a soul!

"I have informed ye that he left a son, named Alexander, behind him. He was a laddie that was beloved by the whole town; and it was him that frae bairnhood was set down as the future husband of Esther Anderson, our minister's daughter. I have already told ye how he enlisted, when he fancied that she was drawing up wi' the young laird and slighting him.

"Now, mark ye, sir—for this is one of the most singular things in the history of our village—about three years after the melancholy deaths of Esther and her father, the laird, wi' a pack o' young men as thoughtless and wicked as himself, came down to the Ha.' It was plain as noon-day that the murder of a young lassie, her bairn, and her honoured

father, had never cost the young libertine a thought. He returned to all his former profligacy, as a sow returns to its wallowing in the mire.

"He was returning, towards evening, with three or four of his companions from an otter-hunt, and was within a quarter of a mile of the Ha', when he was met by two strangers—the one a youth, and the other a man of middle age.

"'Stand!' cried the young man, sternly.

"'What do you want, fellow?" inquired the laird, proudly.

"'Dismount!' retorted the other, 'and take this!' presenting to him a pistol. 'I come to avenge the murder of Esther Anderson and her father!—and,' added he, 'wi' your blood to wash the bruise ye have inflicted on my wounded heart! Did ye think, because her brave brother was with the dead, that there was none left to revenge the ruin of her innocence? Beneath the very tree where we now stand, she plighted me her first vow, and we were happy as the birds that sang upon its branches, until ye, as a serpent, crossed our path. Dismount, Laird Cochrane, if ye be not coward as weel as villain!'

"'Alexander Elliot?' replied the laird, 'are ye not aware that I am a magistrate, and have power to commit ye even now as a deserter. Begone, sir, and take your hand from my horse's head, for it becomes not a gentleman to quarrel wi' such as you.'

"'Dismount! ye palsy-spirited slave!' cried Alexander, 'and choose your weapon and your distance. Let your friends that are wi' you see that ye have fair play. Dismount! or I will shoot ye dead where ye sit!' And as he spoke he dragged him from his horse.

"It was an awful tragedy to take place in a peaceable corner of the earth like this. The stranger that accompanied Alexander took the pistols, and addressing one of the gentlemen that were wi' the laird, said coolly,—'This business must be settled, sir; and the sooner the better. Choose ye one of these weapons, and let the principals take their ground.'

"They did take their ground, as it was termed, and their pistols were levelled at each other's heart. Guilt and surprise made the laird to tremble, but revenge gave steadiness to the hand of young Elliot. Both fired at the same

moment, and with a sudden groan the laird fell dead upon the ground.

"Some said that the earth was weel rid of a prodigal, while others thought it an awfu' thing that he should have been cut off in such a manner, in the very middle of his iniquities, and career of wickedness; and it was generally regretted that he should have fallen by the hand of a lad so universally respected as Alexander Elliot. Such, sir, was the end of the young laird, but what has become of Alexander is more than any one in these parts can tell. I have just now a few words to say concerning

JOHNNY GRIPPY.

"The Grippies were a very remarkable family, and it was a common saying, that they were weel named. There were originally three brothers of them; and when I first kenned them they were ragged, bare-legged callants, but every one of them as keen as a Jew, and as hard as a flinty rock. Two of them were in the cattle line; and through stinginess, cheatery, and such like means, they amassed a power of money. But both of them died, and being unmarried, their brother Johnny became sole heir to their property. He was a man that would have walked ten miles to pick up a farthing. He keepit a shop, or what the Americans would call a *store* in the village, for he sold everything, new and auld, good, bad, and indifferent—eatable and wearable, or for whatever purpose it was wanted; for everything ye could think about was to be had for money at the shop of Johnny Grippy. Of late years it was weel ascertained that he dealt extensively in sending whisky into England, and in such a way, too, that neither the dirdum, the risk, nor the loss could land at his door. But he had dealings in many concerns, both here and elsewhere. Wherever he heard of anything by which there was money to be made, he always endeavoured to get his finger in. It was affirmed that he was connected wi' some wealthy trading companies about London, and that he had ships upon the sea. I know for a positive fact, that he went up to the great city every year, and that he actually begged his way there and back again. But it is my opinion that he made the greater part of his wealth by lending out money to usury. By this

means, a great deal of property fell into his possession, for he was as cruel as a starving tiger. He was a despiser of both justice and mercy, and all he cared about was—'*I maun hae my bargain.*' That was always his answer, if onybody offered to intercede wi' him for ony poor creature that he was distressing.

"The auld knave endeavoured to cover his avarice wi' the cloak of religion, and, as I have already informed ye, sought to be made an elder; and, as ye have been made aware, he never forgave our late worthy minister for the slight and disappointment, but, even against his nature, parted wi' money to obtain a cruel revenge. It would tire you if I were to inform you of the one thousandth part of Johnny's meanness, and the instances of his ravening avariciousness, or the misery which he caused in the habitations of both high and low. Indeed I may say, that he grew rich through the ruin of others; and he sought out objects of misery on which he might fix his devouring talons, even as a vulture seeketh out a dead carcase.

"At an enormous interest, he lent money to the auld laird; and he cunningly permitted the interest to accumulate, year after year, until the laird's death. He also advanced sums to the young laird, at a rate even more usurious, and got the entire title-deeds of the estate into his hands as security; and when the laird fell in the duel wi' Alexander Elliot, he seized and took possession of the Ha' estate, and all that was thereon, claiming them as his! The whole parish was thunderstruck wi' astonishment.

"The next kin to the young laird threatened to throw the case into the Court of Chancery.

"'Let them,' said Johnny, laughing in his sleeve, 'they will live lang that live to see it settled there—and, *I will hae my bargain.*'

"Weel, the case was thrown into Chancery, and Johnny did not live to see it settled, for settled it is not until this day, and what some one said of eternity might be said of it—it is 'beginning to begin.'

"I think ye heard that John had acquired a habit of slipping owre to Luckie Riddle's, on the edge of his foot for a dram before breakfast. He took a strong liking for her strong bottle, and by way of saving the expense of the dram, he left

off the practice of taking a breakfast; and when the single dram increased to two and three in the day he confined himself to one meal, and that of the poorest and scantiest kind—a potato and salt, or maybe a herring as a luxury. But it was more than suspected that the potatoes on which he lived were not all honestly come by; for I myself have seen him in a field amongst other folks, stooping down and fingering at the drills, and slipping the potatoes into his coat pocket; and when asked what he was doing, he would have said (quite collectedly, for there was no possibility of confusing him), 'Ou, I am just looking what sort of a crop such a one is going to have this year.'

"But the miser's love of drink increased upon him, and the more he spent on liquor the more he hungered himself. He became a living skeleton, and in the depth of a severe winter, he was found sitting dead behind his desk, with the copy of a letter before him, in which he had instructed his man of business to sell off immediately the husband of Peggy Lilly."

"The husband of Peggy Lilly!" interrupted the stranger, who had hitherto listened to the records of the patriarch in silence—"who was he!"

"That," resumed the old man, "seems to interest you, and wherefore I cannot divine, as I have no recollection of your face; but, if ye have patience and hearken ye shall hear all that I can tell ye of the history of

PEGGY LILLY.

"Peggy was allowed to be the bonniest lass in all the parish; but she was as prudent and sedate as she was bonny, and everybody wondered that she keepit company wi' William Archbold sae lang as she did, after he had gien himsel' up to a habit o' dissipation. Though she, perhaps, thocht as I did, that it was mere thochtlessness in the young man, that he was jist drawn awa by his friend Thomas Elliot, and that, if he were married, he would reform. Luckie Riddle's sign, however, was a black sicht to him, and I doot it has been a heartsore to puir Peggy. The difference that the subject gave rise to between them, was perhaps unlucky for the happiness o' baith parties. In the vexation o' the moment, she uttered

words o' harshness which her heart did not dictate, and, in leaving as he did, he acted rashly.

"When we heard, however, of William Archbold's having left the town, and the cause o' his leaving (that it arose from Peggy having spoken to him as if disgusted at his conduct), we laughed and said he would soon come back again. She thought the same thing; but weeks and months succeeded each other, and now five-and-twenty years have passed, and the lad has been no more heard of. How deeply Peggy grieved for her conduct, and mourned his absence, was visible in her countenance.

"About ten years after her sister's death, her parents, who had both become very frail, were thrown out o' their bit farm after several very unfortunate seasons in it, and they were left entirely dependent upon her exertions for their support. They were reduced to very great straits, and many a time it was a wonder to me how they lived; but late and early did she toil for their maintenance; and, poor hizzy, the sorrow that fell upon her face for the loss of William Archbold never left it.

"At that time a very decent man, who had taken a small farm in the neighbourhood, began to pay attention to her, and often called at her faither's house. She heard his request that she would marry him, wi' a sigh—for she hadna forgotten Blithe Willie. But her faither and mither looked at her wi' the tears in their een, and they besought her night and day, that they might see her settled and provided for. She at length yielded to their solicitations, and gied him her hand; but she was candid enough to confess to him, that her affection couldna accompany it, though her respect and duty should.

"So far as the world could judge, they seemed to live happily together, and Peggy made an exemplary wife; but there was always like a quiet settled melancholy on her countenance. Their farm was too dear taken, and about a year after they were married, it became the property of Johnny Grippy. Ye have already heard what sort of man he was, reaping where he had not sown. He exacted his rent to the last farthing, or without ceremony paid himself doubly from the stock upon the farm.

"Peggy's husband became unable, though he struggled early and late, to make up his rent, and having fought until his

strength was exhausted, and his health and heart broken, he sank down upon his bed, a dying man; and Johnny, causing the sheriff's officer to seize all that was upon the farm, made them seize also the very bed upon which the dying man lay. He, in fact, died in their hands, and Peggy was turned out upon the world, a friendless widow, with two helpless infants at her knee; and a sore, sore fight she has had, to get the bite and the sup for them, poor things, from that day to this."

"But," replied the stranger with emotion, "there is one left who will provide for her and her children."

"Who may that be?" inquired the patriarch.

"William Archbold;" answered the other.

"Preserve us!" said the old man in surprise; "I daresay I have been blind not to have recognised ye before—ye are William!"

"I am," replied the other; "Blithe Willie, as you once termed me. Peggy's cutting and just rebuke roused my pride and filled me with self-abasement at the same instant. In a state of mind bordering on madness I left the village, where I considered my character to be blasted for ever. I went to London, and there engaged to go out to India. I was there fortunate in business, and in a few years became rich. I there some years ago discovered Alexander Elliot (the son of my old companion), whose regiment had gone to the East, and not to the West Indies as you supposed. I purchased his discharge, and employed him as a clerk. He requested permission to visit this country, and it was granted; but I knew not the deadly nature of his errand. It was during that visit that he so fatally avenged the ruin of poor Esther. He is again in India, and prospering. But you say that Peggy has been married, that she is a widow—a widow."

"Yes, a widow, sir," answered the patriarch; "and if ye be single, I think ye canna do better than make her a wife."

"No! no!" said William, drawing his hand across his eyes, "I cannot, I will not glean where another has reaped. But here is a bank order for five hundred pounds, let it be conveyed to her, but let her never know the hand from whence it came."

"Hoots! nonsense, Maister William," cried the old man,

"see her again for auld langsyne at ony rate, and gie her it yersel'."

What course William Archbold would have adopted, I cannot tell, but at that moment Peggy passed down the street, and spoke to the old man as she passed. William started to his feet, he stretched out his hand, he exclaimed—"Peggy!"

She was speechless—tears gushed into her eyes. Old love, it is said, soon kindles again. Be this as it may, within six weeks Peggy left the village in a coach as the wife of William Archbold, and her children accompanied her.

THE WHITSOME TRAGEDY.

WHEN our forefathers were compelled to give up the ancient practice of crossing the Borders, and of seizing and driving home whatever cattle they could lay their hands upon, without caring or inquiring who might be their owner—in order to supply their necessities, both as regarded providing themselves with cattle and with articles of wearing apparel, they were forced to become buyers or sellers at the annual and other fairs on both sides of the Border. Hence, they had, as we still have, the fairs of Stagshawbank, Whitsunbank, St. Ninian's, St. James', and St. Boswell's; with the fairs of Wooler, Dunse, Chirnside, Swinton, and of many other towns and villages. Of the latter several fell into disuse; and that of Whitsome was discontinued. Whitsome, or *White's home*, is the name of a village and small agricultural parish in the Merse, which is bounded by the parishes of Swinton, Ladykirk, Edrom, and Hutton. Now, as has been stated, Whitsome, in common with many other villages, enjoyed the privilege of having held at it an annual fair. But, though the old practice of lifting cattle, and of every man taking what he could, had been suppressed, the laws were not able to extinguish the ancient Border spirit which produced such doings, and, at the annual fairs, it often broke forth in riot, and terminated in blood. It was in consequence of one of those scenes, and in order to suppress them, that the people of Whitsome were deprived of a fair being held there; the particulars whereof, in the following story, will be unfolded.

About the middle of the seventeenth century, there resided upon the banks of the Till, and a few miles above its junction with the Tweed, a widow of the name of Barbara Moor. She

had had seven sons ; but they and her husband had all fallen in the troubles of the period, and she was left bereaved, desolate, and without a comforter. Many said that affliction had turned her brain ; but even before she was acquainted with days of sorrow, or with nights of lamentation, there was often a burning wildness in her words, and her manners were not as those of other women. There was a tinge of extravagance, and a character of vehemence in all her actions. Some of her neighbours sympathised with her, because of the affliction that rendered her hearth desolate ; but the greater part beheld her with reverential respect, or looked upon her with fear and trembling, believing her to be leagued with the inhabitants of the invisible world, and familiar with the moon and stars, and reading in their courses the destinies of nations and of individuals as in a book. The character of a being who could read the decrees of fate, and even in some instances control the purposes of men, was certainly that which she seemed most pleased to assume ; and its wildness soothed her troubled thoughts, or directed them into other channels.

In her youth, and before her father had been compelled to bow his head to the authority of the wardens of the marches, she had resided in a castellated building, of greater strength than magnitude ; one of the minor strongholds on the Border, and which might have been termed towers for the protection of stolen cattle. But when the two nations came beneath the sovereignty of one monarch, and the spear of war was transformed into a pruning-hook, there went forth a decree, that the strongholds, great and small, along the Borders, should be destroyed ; and amongst those that were rendered defenceless and uninhabitable, was the turret which, for many generations, had been occupied by the ancestors of Barbara Moor. During the lifetime of her husband, she had resided in a comfortable looking farm-house, the appearance of which indicated that its inhabitants were of a more peaceful character than were those, who, a few years before, had occupied the prison-like houses of strength. She now resided in a small mud-built and turf-covered hovel, which in winter afforded but a sorry shelter from the "pelting of the pitiless storm."

But Barbara was used to bear the scorching sun of summer, and the cold and storms of winter. She walked in the midst

of the tempest, and bowed not her head; and she held converse with the wild lightning and the fierce hail, speaking of them as the ministers of her will. For nearly nine months every year she was absent from her clay-built hovel, and none knew whither she wandered.

It is necessary, however, for the development of our story, that we here make further mention of her husband and her sons. The elder Moor had been a daring freebooter in his youth; and often, in the morning, and even at dead of night, the "fray of support," the cry for help, and the sudden summons for neighbours and kinsmen to rise and ride, were raised wheresoever he trod; and the sleuth-hounds were let loose upon his track. It was his boast that he dared to ride farther to humble an enemy, than any other reiver on either side of the Border. If he saw, or if he heard, of a herd of cattle or a flock of sheep to his liking, he immediately "marked it for his own," and seldom failed in securing it; and though the property so obtained was not purchased with money, it was often procured with a part of his own blood—and with the blood, and not unfrequently the lives, of his friends, followers, and relatives. And when law and justice became stronger than the reiver's right, they by no means tamed his spirit. Though necessity then compelled him to be a buyer and seller of cattle, he looked upon the occupation and the necessity as a disgrace, and he sighed for the honoured and happier days of his youth, when the freebooter's might was the freebooter's right. His sons were young men deeply imbued with his spirit; and it was their chiefest pleasure, during the long winter evenings to sit and listen to him, while he recorded the exploits and hairbreadth escapes of his early days. He frequently related to them strange adventures and contests, which he had in his youth with one Walter Cunningham, who resided near Simprin, in Berwickshire, and who was not only regarded as a wealthy man, but as one of the boldest on the Borders. He had often boasted of the number of his herds and defied the stoutest heart in Northumberland to lay hand upon their horns. The elder Moor had heard this defiance: and being resolved to prove that he had both a hand and a heart to put the defiance to the test, the following is one of the adventures which he related to his sons in connection therewith—

"It was about the Martinmas," he said, "when the leaves were becoming few and blighted on the trees; I was courting your mother at the time, and her faither had consented to our marriage; but, at the same time, he half cast up to me, that I had but an ill-plenished house to take home a wife to—that I had neither meal in the press, kye in the byre, nor oxen in the court-yard. His own mailing was but poorly provided at the time; and had he looked at hame, he hardly would have ventured to throw a reflection at me.

"'Weel, sir,' said I to him, 'I dinna deny but what you say is true; but I have supple heels, a ready hand, a good sword, and a stout heart, and I ken a canny byre, where there are three score of sleak beasties, weel worth the harrying.'

"'Now ye speak like a lad of sense and mettle,' said the old man; 'and on the first night that ye bring them hame, the plumpest and the fattest o' them shall be slaughtered for the marriage feast of you and Barbara.'

"Then up spoke your mother's brother, and a winsome young man he was, as ye would have found between Tweed and Tyne; and 'Jonathan,' says he to me, 'when ye gang to drive hame the herd, I shall go wi' thee, for the sake of a bout with the bold bragging Cunningham, of Simprin—for I will lay thee my sword 'gainst a tailor's bodkin, it is him ye mean.'

"'It is him, Duncan,' said I—for your uncle's name was Duncan—'though weel do I ken that he keeps them strongly guarded, and blood will flow, and weapons be broken, before we get them into our possession. But gie me your hand, my lad—we two shall be a match for him and a' his backing. What ye take shall be yer own, and what I take, your sister's; and your faither shanna cast up my toom bink and my ill-stocked mailing.'

"'Weel spoken, bairns!' cried your grandfaither, who had been a first hand in such ploys in his young days; 'weel-spoken! I'm glad to see that the spirits of the young generation arena gaun backward; though, since King Jamie gaed to be king in London, as weel as at Edinburgh, our laws are only fit for a few women, and everything is done that can be done to banish manhood, and make it a crime.'

"'Go upon no such an errand,' said your mother to both

of us; 'for there is blood upon baith your brows, and there is death in your path.'

"'Havers, lassie!' cried her faither angrily; 'are ye at your randering again?—what blood do ye see on their brows, mair than I do, or what death can ye perceive in their path? All your mother's highland kinsfolk were never able to throw their second sighted glamour into my een, and my own bairn shanna do it.'

"'Call it randers, or what ye will,' answered she; 'but I see it plain as I see the gray hairs upon your head, that death and lamentation are gathering round my father's hearth, and are hovering and screaming owre it like vultures round a desolate place.'

"Her words made my flesh to creep upon my bones; for, both before that, and a hundred times since, I have heard her say dark and strange things, which sooner or later have owre truly come to pass. However, the foray across to Simprin was delayed till after our marriage; and your mother almost persuaded me to give up all thoughts of it, and instead of my former habits of life, to cultivate the bit ground which my forefaithers had held for two hundred years for the consideration of an armed man's service. But her brother taunted me, and said I was no better than Samson lying wi' his head on the lap of Delilah, and that I had not only given his sister my heart to keep, but my courage also. A taunt was a thing that I never could endure, and that I never would put up wi' from any man that ever was born—and I hope none of ye ever will, or, as I am your faither, ye should be no longer my sons!

"'Weel, this night be it,' said I to your uncle. 'The Tweed will be fordable at Norham—I will have my shelty and weapons ready precisely at eleven, and get two friends to accompany us that I can trust. Do ye the like, and we shall see whose courage will stand firmest before morning.'

"We gave each other our hands upon it, and said it was a bargain, and immediately set about making preparations for the excursion. Before the appointed hour, he rode up to my door, accompanied by two of his faither's servants; and I with my two friends were in readiness waiting for him. Your mother was very bitter against our purpose, and her words and her warnings made my very heart to shake within my

breast. Her eyes flashed as if they had been balls of fire, and her very bosom heaved up and down wi' agitation.

"'Husband!—brother!' she cried, 'listen to me, and give up the mad errand on which ye are bent; for the bloodhound is snuffing the air and gnashing its teeth, and the hooded crow clapping its wings for a feast, and the owl has looked east, west, north, and south, from the auld turret—it has screamed wi' joy, and its eyes are fixed on Simprin! Be wise—be warned—or the moon will set and the sun rise upon unburied bones. Cunningham of Simprin is strong and powerful; he is strong wi' men, he is strong wi' money; and his herds and his hirsels are strongly guarded. Again I say to ye, be wise—be warned—desist!—or auld men will tear their grey hairs, and wives mourn; and those only that live by the gibbet, rejoice wi' the bloodhound and bird of prey!'

"Her words made us both uncomfortable; but we had often been engaged in such exploits, before the expedition was determined on; and we couldna, in the presence of the four men we had engaged to accompany us, abandon it. They were fearless and experienced hands at the trade; but the new laws on the Borders had reduced them to great privations, and their teeth were watering for the flesh-pots of bygone days, no matter at what risk they were to be obtained.

"It was a delightful moonlight night—almost as bright as day; the moon's brightness put out the stars, and not aboon a dozen were visible, though there wasna half that number of clouds in the whole heavens, and they were just like white sheets, that spirits might be sleeping on in the air! We proceeded by way of Twisel to Norham, where we crossed the Tweed to Ladykirk; and as at midnight we passed by the auld kirkyard, I believe I actually put my hands to my ears, lest I should hear the howlets flapping their wings and screaming in the belfry, and turned my face away frae it in a sort of apprehension of seeing a spirit, or something waur, upon every grave; for your mother's prophecies were uppermost in my mind in spite of all that I could say or strive to think. And I believed that your uncle's mind was troubled wi' the same sort o' fears or fancies; for we were both silent the greater part of the road, and spoke very little to each other.

"However, just about one o'clock, and when the moon was

beginning to edge down upon the Lammermuirs, we arrived at an enclosure, in which Cunningham had sixty head of cattle penned. The six of us had but little difficulty in breaking down the gate that opened to the enclosure; and just as we were beginning to drive out the cattle, a man started up on a sort of tower place that was built upon the wall that surrounded them, and hurled a kind of instrument round his head, that made a noise like a thousand corn-craiks crying together in concert, and craiking which to craik loudest and fastest. At the unearthly sound, the cattle also commenced a louting, that might easily have been heard at two or three miles off.

"It at once struck me as the best and wisest step for us to take, that we should put spurs into our horses, and gallop back to Tweedside; for I kenned it would be impossible for us to secure a single cow, surrounded, as we were sure to be in a few minutes, by sixty or a hundred men; and though I was no coward, I was aware that there could be but little bravery in six men attempting to give battle to sixty. But before I had time to come to a determination, or even to speak, I saw your uncle's pistol flash; and, even I may say before I heard the report, I perceived the man tumble down headlong from the turret on the wall, among the horns of the cattle.

"'Ye have done wrong in shooting the lad,' said I, 'ye have raised the whole country-side; and presently Cunningham with all his host will be at our heels.'

"'No fear,' said he; 'there is small danger of that—a dead tongue tells no tales. And Cunningham and his host, as you term them, may be at our face, but never shall they be at our heels, unless it be marching or fighting against a common enemy.'

"We began, therefore, to drive out the cattle, but scarce had we driven them from the enclosure, and turned their heads towards the Tweed, when we heard the baying of Cunningham's blood-hounds, and the shouts of his people.

"The sounds of their horses' feet became audible, and every moment they gained ground upon us. It was apparent that, if we persisted in keeping possession of the cattle, and attempted to drive them before us, within two minutes, and we would be within swords' length of each other.

"'Brother,' said I to your uncle, as I turned and perceived

that the number of our pursuers could not be under thirty, and was conscious that that number would soon be doubled—'Brother,' said I, 'let us spur on our horses, and leave the cattle to cover our retreat. It is no disgrace for six men to flee before sixty.'

"'Be it so,' he said; 'but it was too late. The cattle, scared by the shouting of our pursuers, the howling of their blood-hounds, and the flashing of their torches (for they had lighted fir branches to pursue us, as the moon was setting), tossed their horns in the air, and ran wildly to and fro; so that the horses, in their turn, were scared to pass through them, and we were so hemmed in between thick woods, that there was no riding round them.

"The followers of Cunningham surrounded us with a wild shout and a cry for revenge. But we drew close together—we formed ourselves into a little circle—and waiting the attack of our antagonists, we contended with them hand to hand. Ten of them lay writhing on the earth, or had retired, wounded, from the contest; while our little band remained unwounded, unbroken. For more than a quarter of an hour we maintained the unequal fight. But victory, on our side, was impossible, and escape all but hopeless. Your uncle was the first of our number that fell. The sword of an enemy had pierced his bosom, and I heard him shout to me, in a voice rendered dismal with agony, never to yield!—to fight to the last! as he lay bleeding on the ground.

"I was then contending, hand to hand, with Cunningham. In our rage, we had closed by the side of each other, and each grasped the other by the throat. He shortened his sword, and with a triumphant laugh, was lounging it in my side, when, with a sudden effort, I hurled him from the saddle. As he rose he thrust his sword into the breast of the horse on which I rode, which reared, sprang forward, and fell, and I was thrown upon the ground, in the midst of enemies.

"Two of the four who accompanied us were also wounded, and disabled from continuing the fight; and the other two, upon seeing your uncle and myself upon the ground, surrendered. In my fall, my hand quitted not my sword. I sprang to my feet, and smote around me to the right and to the left, with the fury of a wild beast. My object was to cut my way

through my adversaries to the woods. I at length succeeded; but not until I had been thrice wounded. I rushed forward among the trees, until the sound of my pursuers died away; but the moon had gone down, and I knew not in what direction I ran, but pressed onward and onward, until exhausted, through loss of blood, I fell upon the ground. A sleep that was nae sleep came owre me, and a dream that was nae dream stealed owre my senses; while the blood continued oozing from my wounds, and my soul was creeping away. Something was growing owre my faculties, just like the opening of a starry night, as the gloaming dies away, and star after star peeps out. The first felt happy; just steeped, as it were, in a sensation of pleasantness; and there were sounds like sweet music in my ears. But the feeling of happiness was changed, I kenned not how, for one of pain—the feeling of pleasantness for one of horror—and the sweet sounds into dismal howls. I started up—I grasped my sword firmer in my hand; but the howls departed not wi' the disturbed sleep from which I had been startled; but they broke upon my ear, louder and nearer—the howls of the savage sleuth-hound, that had been sent to track me. I heard the horrid beast snuff the air, and break into short, hurried, and savage howls of delight, within a few yards of me. I had not strength to fly, and if I had had strength, flight would have been impossible. My pursuers seemed to have lost trace of the animal; for I could neither hear their footsteps nor the sound of their voices. I made no attempt at flight, but stood awaiting its approach, with my sword uplifted to smite it. Loss of blood had brought a dimness over my eyes, which, added to the darkness of the wood, made me that I had rather to grope and listen for the animal, than perceive it, as it might attempt to spring upon me. I would rather have met ten enemies than, in darkness, and in my then fainting state, have waited the attack of that savage beast. It sprang upon me—I struck towards it with my sword and wounded it; but the weapon came in contact with the tangled branches of the underwood, and the force of the blow was broken. In another moment and I felt the paws of the monster upon my breast. I grasped it by the throat, and we fell upon the ground together—my enemy uppermost. Its teeth were in my shoulder. After several vain attempts, I drove my sword through its body. The howls

of the fierce beast were terrible. It withdrew its teeth from my shoulder, and struggled to escape; but I still held it by the throat—with the gripe of death I held it—and still, still strove to pierce it again and again. I held it till it was stiff, cold, and dead.

"Wounded, faint, and weary as I was, I ventured from the woods before morning broke, and crossed the Tweed at Kersfield. The sun rose at the very moment that I turned the corner of the hill which conceals our house from the public road, and revealed to me your mother, sitting on the blue stone at the door, as cold and frozen like to appearance as if she had sat there the livelong night (as I afterwards understood she had). Her hands were clasped together, her eyes were raised upward, and her lips were moving, as if she were repeating a prayer, or muttering a charm. When she saw me approaching the door, she rose from the stone, and striking her hand upon her brow, cried—'Jonathan Moor! ye cruel man! ye disregarder of the warnings of her whose life is as the shadow of your life! said I not that the hound was howling, and the raven was flapping its wings for a feast?—yet ye would not listen to my voice! And my brother!—where is my brother?—the son of my mother—more headstrong and foolish than yoursel'! Ye daurna answer, and ye needna answer. He is dead! The horses of Cunningham have trampled on his body and he lies unburied.'

"I didna ken how to find words to speak to her, and, indeed, I was hardly able to speak; for the pain and stiffness of my wounds were terrible to endure, and there was a sickness about my heart that made me that I could have been willing to have lain down and died; and even welcomed death, as a weary man would welcome sleep.

"I was almost recovered from my wounds before we were exactly certain as to your uncle's fate; and that was when three out of the four that had accompanied us were permitted by Cunningham to return home, the other having died of his wounds a few days after the unlucky foray. From their account, it appeared that the person shot by your uncle while watching the cattle against the inroads of an enemy, was none other than the only brother of Cunningham. He was not aware of his brother's death until after the affray, when he

was found lying in the enclosure, into which the cattle were again driven. He was offering a free pardon to all his prisoners, save him by whose hand his brother fell, upon condition that they would betray him, when your uncle, starting up from the uncouth litter of branches, rudely torn from the trees, and upon which he was carried, cried out—'I did it!—my hand brought him down from his watch-box, like a crow from its roost!'

"'To the turret wi' him!' exclaimed Cunningham, wildly; 'and fling him from its pinnacle to the yard below.'

"The fierce command was fiercely and willingly obeyed. Your uncle was borne to the top of the tower over the wall, and hurled headlong to the ground; and he lay there, with the cattle trampling upon him, and the dogs licking his sores, until he was dead.

"Your mother heard the tidings in silence; but from that day until this, she has never been as she used to be. Her anger is awful in a woman; and she vows and says the day will come when she will have revenge upon the name of Cunningham. She has spoken little of her gift of second sight since ye were born; but she is often subject to long and gloomy fits of silent melancholy, as ye have all been witnesses; and I attribute it all to our foray to Simprin. But," the old man would add in conclusion, "would that the good old times were come back again, when I could meet Cunningham in the field; and he should find the hand that unhorsed him five-and-twenty years syne has lost but little of its strength."

Now, the eldest sons of Jonathan and Barbara Moor were twins, and the youngest were also twins, and they had no daughters living. The two eldest were seven-and-twenty, and the two youngest seventeen, when the civil war between the king and the Parliament took place. Walter Cunningham and three sons, with several of his dependants, joined the royal army; and he had but another son, who was then but an infant of a few months old, and whose mother had died, ere his infant lips drew from her breast the nourishment of life. That infant he regarded as the Benjamin of his age, and loved him with a double love for his mother's sake. But, deeming that his duty to his king called him to arms, he,

with his three eldest sons and followers, took the field, leaving the infant in the charge of a tried nurse.

Now, when Jonathan Moor heard that his old enemy had joined the king's standard, although he was too much of an ancient Borderer to care aught for either one party or another, or for any cause save his own hand; yet, to know that Cunningham had joined the king's party, was enough to induce him to join the army of the Parliament. He knew nothing about the quarrel—and he cared nothing; neither did he understand anything of the religious disputes of the period; for, generally speaking, religion upon the Borders in those days was at a very low ebb. In Berwick, and other places, John Knox, the dauntless apostle of the north, with others of his followers, had laboured some years before; but their success was not great; the Borderers could not be made to understand why they should not "take who had the power," even though kings and wardens issued laws, and clergymen denounced judgments against the practice. It was of no use to tell them "Thou shalt not steal;" the difficulty was to convince them what was theft. It was, therefore, merely because his former adversary and his sons were in the king's army, that Jonathan Moor, with his sons, joined the army of the Parliament.

Barbara protested bitterly against the departure of her husband and her sons to take part in the wars. "Wherefore, Jonathan," she cried, "wherefore will ye sacrifice yourself, and why will ye gie up my winsome sons to the jaws of death? Is there not enough provided for the eagles' and the ravens' banquet, without their bonny blue een to peck at? Bide at hame, and, with my bairns, plough up the green fields, that the earth may provide us with food, as a fond mother, from its bosom. But go ye to the wars, and your destiny is written—your doom is sealed. The blackness of lonely midnight hangs over me as a widow's hood, and like Rachel, I shall be left to weep for my children, for they will not be! Turn again, my husband, and, my sons, lay down your weapons of war. Hearken unto my voice, and remember that ye never knew one of my words fall to the ground. If ye go now ye rush upon the swords that are sharpened for your destruction, and ye hasten to fatten the raven and the worm; for the winds shall sing your dirge, as your bonny yellow hair waves

to the blast, and the gloaming and the night fling a shroud owre your uncoffined limbs. Ye go, but ye winna return. Ye will see the sun rise, but not set—and these are hard words for a mother to say."

But her husband and her sons were men of war. They loved its tumult and its strife, as a hound loveth the sound that calls it to the chase, or a war-horse the echoes of the bugle; and, though they at times trembled at her wild words, they regarded them not. Taking their route by way of Coldstream, Greenlaw, and Soutra Hill, in order to avoid the army of General Leslie, which then occupied the eastern part of Lammermuir, they descended towards Dunbar, were they enrolled themselves as volunteers in the army of Cromwell. A few days after their arrival, they joined a skirmishing party, and in a wild glen, near to Spot, they encountered a similar company that had been sent out by General Leslie. In the latter party, were Walter Cunningham and his three sons, and he, indeed, was their commander.

It was with a look of ruthless delight that Jonathan Moor descried his old enemy at the head of the opposite party; and he said unto his sons—"Yonder is the murderer of your uncle—Cunningham of Simprin, with his three young birkies brawly mounted, and riding sprucely at his back. But, before night, the braw plumes in their beavers shall be trampled on the earth, and the horse will be lame that carries one of them back. Stick ye by my side, and ride ye where I ride; for it will be music to your mother's soul to ken that her brother's death is avenged, and by the hands of her own flesh and blood."

The two parties rode forward and met each other. The Cunninghams and the Moors were face to face. The two fathers sat as if fixed upon their saddles for a few seconds, eyeing each other with looks of deadly hatred and ferocity and recalling the days and the strife of other years.

Though neither party mustered fifty, the onset was fierce and furious—the struggle long and desperate; and, on each side, more than half their original number lay dead or wounded on the ground. Amongst the former were the seven sons of Jonathan Moor, and the three sons of Walter Cunningham. The old men maintained a desperate combat with each other, apart from the rest, until, breathless and exhausted, both for

a few minutes paused, each holding the point of his sword towards the other's breast; and they now looked once more into each other's face, and again upon the ground, where they beheld the dead bodies of their sons. Grief seemed to seek expression in redoubled rage—again their swords clashed against each other, and gleamed in the sunbeams, rapid as the fitful lightning. After a long and sore contention, in which both had given and received wounds, they fell upon the ground together; but Moor received his death-wound on the ground and he fell to rise no more.

"I die!" he gasped, still grasping his antagonist by the breast—"I die, Cunningham—with my children, whom I have led to death, I die; but, remember, there is one left to avenge our deaths, and she will avenge them sevenfold!"

Thus saying, his head fell back upon the ground, and he spoke not again. Cunningham, disengaging himself from the dead man's grasp, went towards the bodies of his children and throwing himself upon the earth by their side, he kissed their lifeless eyeballs, and mourned over them. His grief was too intense and his wounds too severe, to permit him continuing with the army, and he returned to his estate near Simprin, to watch over and protect his infant and only surviving son.

When the tidings were brought to Barbara Moor, that she, in one day, had been bereaved of her husband and seven sons, and that the former had fallen by the hand of Cunningham, the destroyer of her brother, she sat and listened to the bearer of the evil tidings as one deprived of the power of speech and motion. Her cheeks, her eyes, manifested no change; but she sat calm, fixed, and entranced in the apathy of death. Her hands remained folded upon her bosom, and her head moved not. The messenger stood wondering and horror-struck, and twice he repeated his melancholy tale; but the listener took no outward note, either of his words or his presence, and he departed, marvelling at the silent sorrow of the widow.

"I knew it, man," she exclaimed, starting from her death-like trance after the messenger had departed—"I knew they would not return to me. I told them, but they believed me not—they would not hearken to my words. Miserable, deserted being that I am! wherefore should I live to mourn with the winter winds, or make a companion of the fearsome

echoes that howl in the dark glens? Has not my husband, and have not my seven winsome sons, than whom there was not in Northumberland seven comelier lads—not to say brothers—oh, have not they, in one day, been snatched away, and swallowed up from me, as a jewel that is flung into the deep sea! But I will live to be avenged of their deaths, and my brother's death; and their destroyer shall not dandle a bairn upon his knee, or kiss its cheek, while mine are *all, all* dead, and in a strange grave, and even wi' no one near to pull up the noxious nettle that may be waving owre their once bonny and snow-white bosoms!"

Thus raved the wretched and childless mother; and from that day she was as one who had no fixed abode or resting place; but, throughout the greater part of the year, wandered to and fro, no one could tell whither; and when she was found near the scenes of happier years, it was as a lonely dweller in the clay-built hovel of which mention has been made. She was a woman of a strong, perhaps it might be said a strange mind; but her imagination was stronger—it was fevered, and early tinctured with gloomy superstitions, until they became like a portion of her creed and her existence, and her afflictions tended to increase its morbidness.

The life of Walter Cunningham now became rapt up in that of his only son—the child was ever before his eyes, and he watched over his growth as over a tender plant. His sole "care was to increase his store," and lay up treasures for the child of his age, the youngest and the only survivor of his flock. The number of his flocks and of his herds increased greatly, and he was in the habit of attending the fairs upon the Borders, to dispose of them. It was Whitsome fair; and he sent there many of his cattle and his sheep for sale. He also attended it, and he took with him his son, who was then a boy of from three to four years of age.

It was drawing towards evening, and Mr. Cunningham, in concluding a bargain with a person who had bought a number of his cattle, was separated from his child. He had not been absent from the spot where he had left him for ten minutes; but the child had disappeared; and search was made for him throughout the fair, but he was nowhere to be found, neither could any one give tidings of him. The anxious father sought his lost child from booth to booth;

and, with his friends, he also searched the adjoining woods. He called his son by name, till, from far amidst the trees, it was echoed back; but that cheerless echo, or the scream of a startled bird, was his only reply. The disappearance of the child was a mystery which no one could unriddle. His father, during the few minutes that he was to be absent, had left him in charge of a servant, who confessed having entered a drinking booth, and as the liquor went round, he perceived not that the child had left his side. For many days his father sought him sorrowing; but all search proved vain.

Mr. Cunningham returned to his house, a heart-broken and miserable man. The last, the only being that he loved on earth, had disappeared from his fond gaze, even as a beautiful vapour of strange shapes and gorgeous colours, which we gaze upon in the heavens, and turning from it but for a moment, we look for it again—but it is not. He refused to listen to words of consolation, or even of hope; and for several years he left not his house, but sat in loneliness, making a companion of his sorrow.

Now, it was on a dark and dismal winter night, seven years after the disappearance of his son, when the hail rattled fiercely against the narrow casements of his habitation, and the wind howled wildly over the earth, tearing the branches from the naked trees, and causing the cattle to crowd together for shelter—that a wild voice was heard singing a wilder dirge, as if to the measure and music of the storm. The sound came from an open shed adjoining the house, where the cattle had been placed for shelter.

The servants informed their master that a strange woman, whose wits seemed disordered, had crept into the shed, where, before morning, from the fury of the storm, she would doubtless perish. They took a light, and he accompanied them to the shed.

Before them a wretched being sat upon the straw, and the hail dashed bitterly against her unshrinking but time-worn and storm-beaten features. Her grey hairs waved loose and wildly in the wind. Her hands were clasped together upon her breast; and as she sat, she sang the wild and melancholy dirge that has been mentioned. The burden of the strain was "Childless!—childless!—childless!" And again it waxed

louder, and a prayer for vengeance was wildly sung. She sat and continued her dirge, regardless of their presence, and appeared as though she saw them not. The tears gathered in the eyes of Mr. Cunningham as he listened to her dark words, and his limbs shook with a trembling motion.

"Take her into the house," said he, "and give her food and shelter for the night. If my poor boy yet live, he may be now perishing, with none to shelter him."

At his mention of his lost son, her wild strain suddenly ceased. She started to her feet; and as she fixed upon him her haggard features, while her gray hairs, and the many coloured rags that covered her, waved in the stormy wind, she seemed as though she were not an inhabitant of the earth, but rather the demon of the storm.

"Ha! ha! ha!" she cried with a hideous laugh, that made the beholders and the hearers shudder; "shelter from you!—the murderer of my brother!—of my husband!—of my children!—of my seven fair sons!—you that have made me childless! Back to thy dwelling, dog; and if it will add another drop of torturing anxiety to your soul, to know that your son lives, and that you shall see him, but never know him—learn that he does live! He lives!"

"Where, woman!—where?" exclaimed the wretched father.

She hastily dashed a sort of lantern from the hand of the servant who held it, and rushing from the shed towards the open fields, again laughed more dismally than before, and cried —"Where? She whom ye have made childless, leaves that *where* to torture you for ever!"

The wretched father rushed after her; but, in the darkness, the noise, and tempest of the night, it was impossible to trace in what direction she had fled. As every reader must be already aware, the strange and fearful-looking woman was Barbara Moor, the widowed and childless mother. The words which she had spoken, regarding his son being yet alive, increased the anxious misery of Walter Cunningham. It caused his wounds, the anguish of which time had in some degree abated, to bleed afresh. At one time he doubted, and at another he believed, the words which the seeming maniac had uttered; and he made journeys to many places in the

hope of again meeting her, and of extorting from her a confession where he should find his son, or of obtaining some information that might throw light upon his fate. But his journeys then were as fruitless as his former inquiries.

We must here introduce another character to our readers, in the person of Sandy Reed. At the period at which we introduce him, he was a widower, between forty and fifty years of age, with an only daughter, named Anne, a child of five years old; and his house was kept by a maiden aunt, who was on the aged side of sixty. Sandy was a farmer near the Reed Water in Northumberland, and as fine a specimen of the ancient Northumbrian farmer as could be met with—a distinct race, a few samples of whom were here and there to be found within the last thirty years—free, careless, hospitable, happy, boisterous, unlettered, and half civilized. Sandy was one of these in their primitive state. He was in truth—

> "A fine old English farmer,
> One of the olden time."

He was as hardy as the hills on which his sheep fed. He was ready at all times either to shake hands or to break a head—to give or to take. No one ever entered his house and went out hungry. He had a bed, a bite, and a bottle for every one, and he was wont to say that he would rather treat a beggar than lose good company. He was no respecter of rank, nor did he understand much concerning it. He judged of the respect due to every one by what he called the "rule of good fellows." Burns makes the wife of Tam o' Shanter say—

> "Ilka horse ye ca'ed a shoe on,
> The smith and you gat roaring fu' on."

But Tam had been but the degenerated shadow of Sandy Reed, for every time he had to pay a visit to the smith with his nag, they would have

> "Been fu' for weeks thegither!"

When he had business at Morpeth market, his journey home never occupied less than a fortnight, though the distance was

not quite thirty miles; for the worthy farmer had to stop three or four days at every hostelry by the way, for the sake of company, as he affirmed, and the good of the road; but he cared not much for going half a dozen miles out of his way to add another house of entertainment to the number; and, it mattered not to him whether the company he met with were Roundheads or Cavaliers, provided they could show the heel-taps of their bottle, and, in the intervals of bringing in a new one, wrestle, run, leap, or put, or quarrel in a friendly way, if they preferred it.

But we shall record a portion of Sandy's adventures, so far as they are connected with our story, in his own words. The following was one of his favourite anecdotes of himself:—

"It was about three years after my wife's death, poor body," he began, "that I had been owre at Morpeth market, wi' four score o' ewes and six score o' hogs. I was at least comfortable when I left Morpeth, but noughts aboon comfortable; for I had only had twenty queghs[1] o' English gin (which, thou must understand, in our part of the country means Cheviot made whisky), and seven o' them were public house ones, which wadna count aboon three or four guid ones—so thou seest I had had noughts in the world to make me onything but sober. Hoos'ever, I jist thought to mysel,' thinks I—drat! I'll away round by Elsdon, and see what a' my cronies there are about. So, 'To the right, Dobbin, my canny fellow,' said I to my nag—and it was as wise an animal as ever man had to speak to; it knawed every word I said, and understood me whether I was drunk or sober, mony a time, when ne'er a one else could make out what I said. But the poor beast had had sae meikle experience wi' me, that it knawed what I meant by a wink as weel as a nod. So I said to it—'To the right, Dobbin, my canny fellow; thou shalt be foddered at awd Betty Bell's t'night, and if a' be as it shud be, thou shalt hae a rest t'morrow, tee, into the bargain.' So Dobbin took away across the moor to Elsdon, just as natural as a Christian could hae done. Weel, when I reached Elsdon, and went into Betty Bell's, there were five o' my cronies sitting. They were a' trumps, and they gied

[1] The wooden quegh, used as a drinking vessel in those days, contained rather more than would fill a wine-glass.

me three cheers when I went in, for they knawed that I was out and out a good 'un.

"'Ha! Sandy!' said they, 'thou'rt welcome, my canny lad—we just wanted ye to make the half dozen. Hast thou been at Morpeth?'

"'Yea,' said I, 'and hae just come round by Elsdon to hae a bout wi' thee.'

"'So be it,' said they; and we sat down in gud earnest, and three glorious days we had, and would have had mair, but that we drank Betty Bell's cupboards dry. The stars were just beginning to wink out as I got my feet in the stirrups, and, to confess the truth, I was winking far worse than the stars. However, Dobbin took across the moors, and I was in the high road for my home. How it was I dinna knaw; but I rather think that I had fallen asleep, and that something or other had scared the nag, and I had slipped out o' the saddle. I mind o' lying very cauld and uncomfortable, half dreaming, half-waking, and, I daresay, more than three parts the worse o' drink. I mind, tee, o' calling to my aunt as I thought, 'Auntie!—do thou hear?—bring another blanket to throw owre me, and put out that light—I canna get a wink o' sleep for it.' Then I thought I found something upon my breast, that was like my little Anne's head, and I put my hand out, and I said, 'Is that thee, Anne, love?' But there was no answer; and I gied the head a shake, when, my conscience! there was such a frightened squall got up, that I sprang right upon my feet, and, to my astonishment, there had I been lying upon the moor, wi' Dobbin at my side, and the light which I had wished to put out was neither more nor less than the moon! But what surprised me most of all, and put me about what to dow, was, that what I had taken for my little Anne that had creeped to my side, as she often did when I came home, was nowther more nor less than a wee, ragged, infant laddie, that had been lying fast asleep, wi' its head upon my bosom! There wasna a living creature in human shape upon the moor but our two sells; and how he came there was a miracle to me! 'Laddie,' says I, 'where dost thou come frae? What be thy faither, eh?—or thy mother? Be they alive?—or who brought thee here? Come, tell me, and I will gie thee a penny.'

"But the poor bairn seemed more bewildered to find itsel'

where it was than I did, and the more I offered to speak to it, it cried the louder.

"'Why, thou needna cry,' said I, 'I winna eat thee, but how came thou here?—and where be thy faither and mother?'

"However, I could get nought but screams and cries o' terror out o' the little innocent; so I cried all round the moor, at the very pitch o' my voice—'Holloa!—be there any one within hearing that has lost a bairn?' But I am thinking that I might have cried till now, and nobody would have answered, for it is my belief the bairn came there by magic! I canna say that I have seen the fairy folk mysel', though I have heard them often enough, but I am inclined to believe that they had a hand in stealing away the infant laddie frae his parents, and laying his head upon my breast on the moor. I declare to thee, though I couldna stand steady, I was at a stand still what to do. I couldna leave the infant to perish upon the moor, or I should never hae been able to sleep in my bed again wi' the thoughts on't; and whenever I had to go to Morpeth, why, I should hae been afeared that its little ghost would hae haunted me in the home-coming; and, if I would hae been afeared o' it, it is mair than I would hae been o' meeting the biggest man in a' Northumberland. But, if I took it hame, why, I thought again, there would be sic talking and laughing amang wur neighbours, who would be saying that the bairn was a son o' my awn, and my awd aunt would lecture me dead about it. However, finding I could mak naething out o' the infant, I lifted him up on the saddle before me, and took him home wi' me.

"'Why, what be that thou hast brought, Sandy lad?' asked my awd aunt, as she came to the door to meet me.

"'Why, it be a bairn, aunt, that I found on the moor, poor thing,' said I.

"'A bairn!' quoth she—'I hope thou be na the faither o't, Sandy?'

"'I'll gie thee my hand and word on't, aunt,' said I, 'that I knaw nowther the faither nor mother o't; and from the way in which I found it upon the moor, I doubt whether ever it had owther the one or the other.'

"My aunt was easier satisfied than I expected, and, by degrees I let out the whole secret o' the story o' finding him, both to her and to my neighbours. Nobody ever came to

own him, and he soon grew to be a credit to the manner in which I had brought him up. Before he could be more than seventeen, he was a match for ony man on Reed water or Coquet side, at ony thing they dared to take him up at. I was proud o' the laddie, for he did honour to the education I had gien him; and, before he was eighteen, he was as tall as mysel'. He isna nineteen yet; and my daughter Anne and him are bonnier than ony twa pictures that ever were hung up in the Duke o' Northumberland's castle. Ay, and they be as fond o' each other as two wood pigeons. It wud do thy heart good to see them walking by Reed water side together, wi' such looks o' happiness in their eyes, that ye wud say, sorrow could never dim them wi' a tear. Anne will be a year, or maybe two, awder than him; but, as soon as I think he will be one-and-twenty, they shall be a wedded pair. Ay, and at my death, the farm shall be his too—for a better lad ye winna meet in a' Northumberland, nor yet in a' the counties round about it. He has a kind heart and a ready hand; and his marrow, where strength, courage, or a determined spirit are wanted, I haena met wi'. There is, to be sure, a half-dementit, wild awd wife, they call Babby Moor, that gangs fleeing about wur hills, for a' the world like an evil speerit, and she puts strange notions into his head, and makes a cloud o' uneasiness, as it were, sit upon his brow. When I saw that I wud have to keep him, I didna ken what name to gie him; but, after consulting wi' my friends and the clergyman o' the parish, it was agreed that he should bear the surname o' wur family, and my faither's christian name; so we called him Patrick Reed. But the daft awd wife came upon him one day amang the hills, and she pretended to look on his brow, and read the lines on his hand, and told him, frae them, that Patrick Reed wasna his real name, but that he would find it out some day—that he was born to be rich, though he might never be rich—and that he had an awd gray-haired father that was mourning for him night and day, and that he had adopted the son of a relation to be his heir. When he came home he was greatly troubled, but he was too open-hearted to conceal from me, or from Anne, the cause of his uneasiness; and when he had tould us a' that the mad awd wife had said, I tried to laugh him out o' thinking about

it, and bade him bring the bottle and take a glass like a man, and never mind it. But Patrick was nae drinker; and he gravely said to me that the face o' the half daft woman came owre his brain like a confused dream—that he had something like a remembrance of what she had said; and he also thought that he remembered having seen her. I wish the witch had been in the bottom o' the sea ere she met wi' him; for ever syne then—though Anne and he are as kind and as loving as ever—he isna half the lad that he used to be; and there is nae getting him now to take a game at onythin'—though he could beat everybody—for either love or money."

Such was one of the stories which rough, honest fear-nothing Sandy Reed told, in relating his adventures. Now, it came to pass, that when Patrick, the foundling of whom he had spoken, had been sheltered beneath his roof for the space of seventeen years, that Sandy, having introduced turnips upon the lowlands of his farm, proceeded to go to Whitsome fair, to purchase cattle to fatten with them, and also sheep from the Lammermuirs to eat them on the ground. He was now more than threescore, and he was less capable of long journeys than he had been; and he requested that his adopted son Patrick, who was also to be his son-in-law, should accompany him; and it was agreed that they should set out for Whitsome together.

But, on the evening before their departure, as the maiden Anne was returning from a visit to the wife of a neighbouring farmer, she was intercepted within a mile of her father's house. The sibyl-like figure of Barbara Moor stood before her, and exclaimed—"Stand, maiden! Ye love the young man whom ye call Patrick—whom your father has so called—and who resides beneath his roof. He loves you. And ye shall be wed if I, who have his destiny in my hands, have strength to direct it! And yet there must be more blood!—more!—for I am childless!—childless! We are not even yet!" She paused, and pressed her hand upon her brow; while the maiden, startled at her manner, trembled before her. But she again added—"Yes! yes!—ye shall be wed—the bauble wealth shall be yours, and ye deserve happiness. But hearken, ye maiden, for on the obeying of my words lies your fate. When your faither and Patrick set out for Whit-

some fair, request ye to accompany them—insist that ye do, and ye shall return here a wealthy and a wedded wife; for she says it whose words were never wasted on the wind. Swear, maiden, that ye will perform what I have commanded ye."

"Woman!" said Anne, quaking as she spoke, "I never swore, and I winna swear; but I give thee my hand that I will obey thee. I will go to Whitsome fair wi' my faither and Patrick."

"Go! go!" cried the sibyl, "lest the dark spirit come upon me; and he whom ye call Patrick shall die by his father's hand, or his father by his. But speak not of whom ye have seen, nor of what ye have heard—but go and do as ye have been commanded. Be silent till we meet again."

Anne bent her head in terror, and promised to obey, and the weird woman again exclaiming—"Go!—be silent!—obey!"—hastened from her sight.

When Anne entered the house, her father and her adopted brother, or lover, were making ready for the journey. She sat down silently and thoughtfully in a corner of the apartment, and her half-suppressed sighs reached their ears.

"Why, what in the globe, daughter Anne," said her father, "can make thee sigh? Art thou sad because Patrick is to leave thee to go to a fair for a day or two? I suppose thou wouldn't hae troubled thy head, had thy father been to be absent as many months. But I don't blame thee; I mind I was tender-hearted at thy age too—but Patrick knows better what to say to thee than I do."

"Dear Anne," whispered the youth, taking her hand, "what ails thee?"

"Ask my father," she rejoined hesitatingly, "that I may accompany you to Whitsome fair to-morrow."

"Nay, thou canst not go, dear," returned Patrick; "it is a long ride and a rough one; and the society thou wilt meet with will afford thee no pleasure, and but small amusement."

"I must go," she replied, "a strange being has laid a terrible command upon me!"

"A grey-haired, wild-looking woman?" ejaculated Patrick, and his voice trembled as he spoke.

"Ask me no more," was her reply, "I must—I will accompany you."

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"A dead dream," said the youth, "seems bursting into life within my brain. There are once familiar words ready to leap to my tongue that I cannot utter—and long-forgotten memories haunting my mind, and flinging their shadows over it, as though the substance again were approaching. But the woman that ye speak of!——yes! yes!—there is something more than a dream, dear Anne, that links my fate with her! I remember, I am sure it is no fancy—I do remember having been at a fair when I was a child—a mere child—and the woman ye allude to was there! Yes! yes! you must accompany us! I feel, I am certain, that woman hath indeed my destiny in her hands!"

"Gudness me!" exclaimed Sandy, "what is that that ye twasome are saying between ye? Is there ony light thrown upon the auld story; or is it only the half-crazed randy—(forgie me for ca'ing the poor afflicted creature by ony sic name)—but, I say, is it only some o' the same nonsense that Babby Moor has been cramming into Anne's ear, wi' which she has filled thine, lad? Upon my word, if I hed my will o' the awd witch, I would dook her in the Reed till she confessed that every story she has tould to thee was a lie from end to end."

"Well, father," said Patrick—for he always called Sandy father—"let Anne accompany us to the fair—she requests it, and I will also request it for her."

"Ou, ye knaw," said Sandy, "if ye hae made up yer minds between yoursels, that ye are determined to gaun, I suppose it would be o' no use for me to offer opposition to owther o' the two o' ye. So, if thou wilt go, get thee ready, Anne, my dear, for it will take us to be frae here by twelve o'clock t'night, for it is a lang ride, and a rugged ride, as thou wilt find it to thy cost, ere ye be back again. I was never there, for my own part, but I hear that the sale o' feedin' cattle is expected to be gud—and there I maun be. So get thee ready, daughter, if ye will go, and hap thysel' weel up."

At midnight, Sandy Reed, his daughter, and his adopted son, with three or four farm servants, all mounted on light, but strong and active horses, accustomed to the character of the country, set out for Whitsome fair.

They arrived at Whitsome before noon on the following day, having crossed the Tweed at Coldstream. There was

one individual in the fair, who had some hundred head of cattle exhibited for sale, and that was old Cunningham of Simprin. He himself was present; but he took but small interest in the transactions, for he was becoming old, and was in general melancholy; and a nephew, whom he intended to make his heir, accompanied him, and in most matters made bargains for him, and in his name.

Now Sandy Reed, after walking through the market, said the only lot that would suit him was that of Cunningham of Simprin. We may here observe that throughout the day, young Patrick became thoughtful and more thoughtful. Even the presence of Anne, who leaned upon his arm, could hardly summon up a passing smile into his features.

After much disputing and sore bargain-making, Sandy Reed, at a good round sum, became the purchaser of all the stock that old Walter Cunningham exhibited in the fair. And when the bargain had been completed, the seller, the buyer, and their servants, retired to a booth together; the former to treat his customer with a bottle, and the latter to spend the "luck-penny," which, on such occasions, he was wont to say, would burn a hole in his pocket before he got home.

Both were men who were accustomed to drink deep—for old Cunningham had sought to drown his sorrows in the bottle; and what would have been death to another man, took no effect upon him. Sandy saw him swallow glass after glass without his countenance betraying any symptom of change, with vexation; for he had never before met with a superior, either at the bacchanalian board, or at aught else. But, as the liquor went round, the old men began to forget their age (and for a time, for the first time, Walter Cunningham forgot his sorrows), and they boasted of what they had done; and forgetful that each was above three score, they were ever and anon about to profess what they could still do; but, on such occasions, Anne Reed, who sat by her father's elbow, gently and unobserved, admonished him.

Now, when Sandy found that he might not speak of what he could do, he thought there could be no harm in saying what his adopted son Patrick could do. He offered to match him at anything against any man in Berwickshire, yea, in all

Scotland. The blood of old Cunningham boiled at the bravado. He said he had had three sons—yea, he hoped to have said four—any of whom would have stopped the boasting, and taken up the challenge of his Northumbrian friend. But he said he had still a nephew, and he would risk him against Sandy's champion.

"A bargain be it," cried Sandy, and the young men proceeded to various trials of strength; but the nephew of Cunningham, though apparently a strong man, was as a weaned child in the hands of young Patrick. Their countrymen, on both sides, became enraged, and it soon became a national quarrel. Scores were engaged on either side—knives were drawn and blood spilt; and headmost in the fray, but unarmed, was Sandy Reed, striking to the ground every one on whom his hand fell. But at length he fell, pierced by a knife, by the edge of a pool of water, and his last words were—"Revenge me, Patrick—protect my Anne—mine is yours!"

When weapons were exhibited, young Patrick drew one also, and he dealt a wound at every blow. When he heard the voice of his foster-father, he held the aged Cunningham by the throat, and his hand was uplifted to avenge his protector's death by the sacrifice of the old man's—when a loud, a hurried, and a wild voice cried aloud—"Hold, parricide! hold!—he against whom your hand is raised is your father!"

It was the voice of Barbara Moor. The young man's arms fell powerless by his side as if a palsy had smitten them. He remembered the voice of the sibyl.

"What say ye!" cried the agonised old man—"who is my son?—how shall I know him?" For he, too, remembered her and well.

"He whose hand has been raised against your life," she cried, "and on whose bosom ye will remember and find the mark of a berry! Farewell!—farewell!" she added—"I am childless—ye are not." She had been wounded in the conflict as she rushed forward, and she sank down and died. We might lengthen our story with details; but it would be fruitless. In young Patrick, old Cunningham found his long-lost son; with her last breath Barbara Moor acknowledged how she had decoyed him from the tent, at the fair, where his father had left him; and how, when she saw Sandy Reed asleep upon the moor she had administered to the child a sleeping draught,

and laid him upon his breast. Vain would it be to describe the joy of the old man, and as vain would it be to speak of the double chagrin of the nephew, who lost not only his laurels during the day, but also his hope of riches. Anne sorrowed many days for her father; but gave her hand to him who, in compliance with her request, his father continued to call Patrick; and the fountain by the side of which her father fell is still known in the village of Whitsome by the name of Reed's Well; and, on account of the life lost, and the blood shed on that occasion, Whitsome Fair has been prohibited unto this day.

THE FIRST-FOOT.

NOTWITHSTANDING the shortness of their days, the bitterness of their frosts, and the fury of their storms, December and January are merry months. First comes old Christmas, shaking his hoary locks, belike, in the shape of snow-drift, and laughing, well-pleased, beneath his crown of misle-toe, over the smoking sirloin and the savoury goose. There is not a child on the south side of the Borders, who longs not for the coming of merry Christmas—it is their holiday of holidays—their season of play and of presents; and old and young shake hands with Christmas, and with each other. And even on the northern side of "the river," and "the ideal line" by fancy drawn, which "divide the sister kingdoms," there are thousands who welcome and forget not "blithe Yule day." Next comes the New Year—the bottle, the hot pint, and the *first-foot*—and we might notice, also, Hansel Monday, and "Auld Hansel Monday," which follow in their wake, and keep up the merriment till the back of January is broken. But our business at present is with the *first-foot*, and we must hold. It matters not on what side of the Borders it may be—and northward the feeling extends far beyond the Border—there is a mysterious, an ominous importance attached to the individual who first crosses the threshold after the clock has struck twelve at midnight, on the 31st of December, or who is the *first-foot* in a house after the New Year has begun. The *first-foot* stamps the "luck" of the house—the good fortune or the evil fortune of its inmates throughout the year! But to begin with our story. There was not a person on all the Borders, nor yet in all Scotland, who attached more importance to the first-foot than Nelly Rogers. Nelly was a very worthy, kind-hearted,

yea, even sensible sort of woman, but a vein of superstition ran through her sense; she had imbibed a variety of "auld warld notions" in infancy, and, as she grew up, they became a part of her creed. She did not exactly believe that ghosts and apparitions existed in her day, but she was perfectly sure they *had* existed, and *had* been seen; she was sure, also, there was something in dreams, and she was positive there was a great deal in the luckiness or unluckiness of a first-foot; she had remarked it in her own experience thirty times, and, she said, "it was of nae use attempting to argue her out o' what she had observed hersel." Nelly was the wife of one Richard Rogers, a respectable farmer, whose farm-house stood by the side of the post-road, between Kelso and Lauder. They had a family of several children; but our business is with the oldest, who was called George, and who had the misfortune to receive, both from his parents and their neighbours, the character of being *a genius.* This is a very unfortunate character to give to any one who has a fortune to make in the world, as will be seen when we come to notice the history of George the genius; for such was the appellation by which he was familiarly mentioned. Now, it was the last night of the old year; George was about twelve years of age, and, because he was their first-born, and moreover, because he was a genius, he was permitted to sit with his father and his mother, and a few friends, who had come to visit them, to see the old year out, and the New Year in. The cuckoo clock struck twelve, and the company rose, shook hands, wished each other a happy new year, and, in a bumper, drank, "May the year that's awà be the warst o' our lives."

"I wonder wha will be our first-foot," said Nelly; I hope it will be a lucky ane." The company began to argue whether there was anything in the luck of a first-foot or not, and the young genius sided with his mother; and, while they yet disputed upon the subject, a knocking was heard at the front door.

"There's somebody," said Nelly; "if it's onybody that I think's no lucky, I winna let them in."

"Nonsense," said Richard.

"It's nae nonsense," replied Nelly; "it may be a *flat-soled*

body, for onything I ken; and do ye think I wad risk the like o' that. Haud awa, see wha it is, George," added she, addressing the genius; "and dinna let them in unless you're sure that they dinna come empty-handed."

"Did ever ye hear the like o' the woman?" said her husband; "sic havers! Run awa, George, hinny; open the door."

The boy ran to the door, and inquired, "Who's there?"

"A stranger," was the reply.

"What do ye want?" inquired the genius, with a degree of caution seldom found in persons honoured with such an epithet.

"I have a letter to Master Rogers, from his brother," answered the stranger.

"A letter frae my brother John!" cried Richard, starting from his seat; "open the door, laddie; open the door."

Now, Richard Rogers had a brother, who also had been considered a sort of genius in his youth. He was of a wild and restless disposition in those days, and his acquaintances were wont to call him by the name of Jack the Rambler. But it is a long road that has no turning; he had now been many years at sea; was the captain of a free-trader; and as remarkable for his steadiness and worldly wisdom, as he had been noted for the wildness of his youth. There was a mysterious spot in the captain's history, which even his brother Richard had never been able to unriddle. But that spot will be brought to light by and by.

George opened the door, and the stranger entered. He was dressed as a seaman; and Nelly drew back and appeared troubled as her eyes fell upon him. It was evident she had set him down in her mind as an unlucky first-foot. He was not, indeed, the most comely personage that one might desire to look upon on a New Year's morning; for he was a squat little fellow, with huge red whiskers that almost buried his face, his burly head was covered with a sou'-wester, and his eyes squinted most fearfully. Nelly could not withdraw her eyes from the man's eyes; she contemplated the squint with horror. Such eyes were never in the head of a first-foot before. She was sure that "something no canny would be the upshot."

"Tak a seat, sir; tak a seat, sir," said Richard, addressing the sailor; "fill out a glass, and mak yoursel at me. Nelly,

bring a clean tumbler. And ye hae a letter frae my brother, the captain, sir?" added he, anxiously: "how is he? Where is he? When did ye see him?"

"I left him at Liverpool, sir," replied the queer-looking sailor; "and, as I intended to take a run down overland to Leith to see my old mother, 'Bill,' says he to me—(for my name's Bill, sir—Bill Somers)—well, as I'm saying, 'Bill,' says he, 'you'll be going past the door of a brother of mine, and I wish I were going with you'—(and I wish he had, for not to say it before you, sir, their ain't a better or a cleverer fellow than Captain Rogers, in the whole service, nor a luckier one either, though, poor fellow, he has had his bad luck too in some things; and it sticks to him still, and will stick to him)—however, as I say, said he to me—'Bill, here is a bit of a letter, give it to my brother—it concerns my nevy, George'—(yes, George, I think he called him). So I took the letter and set off—that is, some days ago—and I arrived at the public-house, a little from this, about four hours since, and intended to cast anchor there for the night; but having taken a glass or two, by way of ballast, I found myself in good sailing-trim, and having inquired about you, and finding that you lived but a short way off, and that the people in the house said, it being New Year's times, you wouldn't be moored yet, I desired the landlady to fill me up half a gallon, or so, of her best rum, that I mightn't come empty-handed—for that wouldn't be lucky, ma'am, I reckon," added he, squinting in the face of Mrs. Rogers, who looked now at his eyes, and now at a large bottle, which he drew from beneath a sort of half great-coat or monkey-jacket. Nelly was no friend to spirit-drinking; nevertheless she was glad that her first-foot, though he did squint, had not come empty-handed.

The letter was handed to Mr. Rogers, who, having broke the seal—"Preserve us, Richard!" said Nelly, "that's a lang epistle! I daresay the captain's made his will in't—what does he say?"

"It's a kind, sensible, weel-written letter," said Richard, "for John was a genius a' his days; and there is mair about a will in't than ye're aware o'. But there's nae secret in it. George will read it."

The letter was then given to the genius, who read as follows:—

"Dear Dick—As one of my crew, Bill Somers, who has sailed with me for a dozen years, is going down to Scotland, and will pass your way, I take the opportunity of writing to you, and letting you know that I am as well as a person, who has as much cause to be unhappy as I have, can desire to be. The cause of that unhappiness you don't know, and few know it—but I do, and that's enough. I have made some money—perhaps a good deal—but that's of no consequence. I once thought that I might have *them* of my own flesh and blood to inherit it; however, that was not to be. It is a long story, and a sad story—one that you know nothing about, and which it is of no use to tell you about now. As things are, my nevy, George, is to be heir to whatever money, goods, and chattels I possess."

As her son read this, Nelly thought that it was nonsense, after all, to say that a squint first-foot was unlucky.

"Read on, George," said his father, "and take heed to what your uncle says."

The boy resumed the letter, and again read—

"Now, as my nevy is to be my heir, I think it my duty to lay down a sort of chart—or call it what you like—by which I would wish him to shape his future conduct. I am glad to hear that his head is of the right sort; but let us have none of your fiddle ornaments about it. A lofty prow is not always the best for a storm, and looks bad enough with a Dutch stern. Beware, also, how you let him to sea before his vessel is fairly rigged, caulked, and waterproof—or, if you do, then look out for his growing top-heavy, and capsizing in the turn of a handspike. If you set him off with a bare allowance of ballast, and without a single letter of credit—do you expect him to bring home a cargo! It is stuff, Dick—arrant stuff! All your boy exhibitions are downright swindling. Prodigies, forsooth!—why, parrots can speak, and jackdaws chatter. Or, to render myself intelligible to your agricultural senses, a tree blossoms in its first year, and a selfish deluded idiot plucks it up, exhibits it in the market-place—the bud perishes, and the tree withers, while gaping lubbers wonder that it did not bear fruit! Now, Dick, this is exactly the case with all your fast-sailing miracles. Give a boy the helm, and get him to the drudgery of the cabin again, if you can.

"As to his love affairs, provided the girl of his choice be virtuous, and tolerably pretty—though neither very rich nor very intelligent—see that you don't strike off at a tangent, and, like one of your own stupid cattle, run counter to his will. If you do, it will only hasten what you wish to prevent—or render a marriage certain, which the young couple thought sufficiently doubtful. Besides, your opposition might spoil a poor girl's reputation; and I have always found that imputations of a certain class upon a man, are like marks left upon

the sand within a tide-mark: but to a woman—a lovely, helpless woman—they adhere like a limpit to the rock. Besides this, Dick, I am certain the most powerful impression of moral rectitude you can imprint upon his heart, will be like a pistol fired from a cock-boat, compared to the glorious and irresistible broadside of a seventy-four, when you contrast its influence upon his actions, with the delightful and conquering emotions of love and esteem which he entertains for an amiable woman. Don't preach to me, Dick, for I know when the devil, the world, and the flesh, war against our better principles; and when early instructions, counsels, and those sort of things, are fairly run down and drop astern. Why, if a fellow just think for a moment of the beautiful being, whose soul is as pure as the blue sea on a summer day—if he just think of her—or of her last words—'*Don't forget me!*'—Belay! is the word—about goes the helm—head round from the lee-shore of inconsistency, and he is again quietly moored in the fair-way of virtue.

"When he begins to shape into manhood, *Discretion* is the watch-word; and whatever he or others may think of his abilities, let him douse *Presumption* and stow it below, hoist a *desire to please* at the fore-top, place *Perseverance* at the helm, and *Civility* and *Moderate Ambition* upon the watch. People say they like a plain-spoken, honest fellow, who says what he thinks. But it is all a fudge. Just speak in the jack-blunt manner, which they praise, respecting themselves, and, mark me, they will march off to another tune. Let any man practise this for a time, and he will soon be hated by every soul on board. I don't mean to advise dissimulation, but a man can get enemies enough without making them; therefore, where he has no good to say of a person, though they may have injured him, let him hold his tongue.

"Another thing, and an important one, for him to remember is—he who is the king of good-fellows, and a 'good soul' amongst his associates, is styled by the public a thoughtless man, and by his enemies a drunkard. Now, Dick, in the world of business, a *good fellow* simply means a *good-for-nothing*. Therefore, see to it, and put my nevy on the look-out; for, not to speak of the growing influence of habit, just attribute unsteadiness to a man, and you bring him a wind a-head—stop his credit, and hurl him to ruin headlong. Sobriety is his compass—sobriety is his passport.

"Again, Dick, I would neither wish to see him a booby nor a maw-worm; but I must tell you that the opinion the world forms of us is often cast upon very trivial circumstances. A heedlessly committed action, which we forget in half an hour, others will remember to our disadvantage for twelve months. There is nothing like being well-braced with circumspection; let him always look well to his bearing and distance, or he will soon find himself out in his latitude. No man of any ambition, or whether he was ambitious or not, ever loved a man who presumed to be in all things wiser than himself. I don't wish to lecture upon humbug humility, but diffidence and good-breeding should never be under the poop. Let him take heed, also, how he dabbles in politics or religion. Both concern him, and he must think and act upon both; but he must do so as becomes a man.

I hate all your noisy boatswain politicians, both aboard the Commons and out of it. The moment I see a lubberly fellow swinging his arms about and blowing a hurricane, whether he be endeavouring to blow a nation or a tavern into agitation—there rages a grand rascal, say I; his patriotism, and the froth which he scatters from his mouth, are of a piece. Now, as to his religious principles, of all things, let him keep them to himself. Every man is as much in the right, in his own estimation, as he is. Nothing will procure a man more enemies than a real or affected singularity in matters of religion. For though there is a great deal of good sense afloat in the world, yet there is such a fry of feverish, canting, small craft, always skulking about, and peeping into our *pees* and *ques*, which, though they cannot sink your character, they annoy it with their sparrow-hail. In a word, Dick, every intelligent being's religion lies between his own conscience and his Maker. Give my nevy a Bible, with a father's best blessing—in it he will find the ennobling hopes of eternity, and learn to do unto others as he would wish others to do unto him; and this, from the bottom of my heart, is the advice of his uncle Jack.

"A sterling, upright, moral character, is absolutely indispensable. If the heart be well built, and kept in good sailing-trim, he will have a tell-tale there which will keep all right aloft. As well set a seaman upon a voyage of discovery without a compass, as a young fellow upon the world without a character. But, d'ye see, because you can't go to sea without a compass of this kind, you are not to expect that, in all cases, it will insure you of reaching the Pole. No, Dick, it is rather like a pilot sent out to steer you in, when you are within sight of land, and without whose assistance you cannot reach the port.

"In conversation, too, I hate to see a smooth-water puppy running at the rate of twelve knots, as if no vessel in the fleet could sail but his own. I have seen fellows of this sort, showing off like gilded pinnaces at a regatta, while they were only showing how little they had on board. Two things, in particular, I wish my nevy to avoid—namely, argufying in company, and speaking about himself. There is a time and a place for everything; and, though argument be well enough in its way, he who is always upon the look-out for one, is just as sure as he finds it, to find an enemy; and, as to speaking of one's self, independent of its ill-breeding, it is like a dose of salt-water served round the company. The grand secret of conversation is, to say little in a way to please, and the moment you fail to do so, it is time to shove your boat off. Whenever you see a person yawn in your company, take your hat.

"Independent of these things, let him look well to his tide-table. Without punctuality, the best character becomes a bad one. The moment a man breaks his word, or becomes indifferent to his engagement, why, the confidence of his commodore is at an end; and, instead of being promoted to the quarter-deck, he may slave before the mast till the boatswain's last whistle pipe all hands to his funeral. Punctuality, Dick—systematical, methodical punctuality—is a fortune to a fellow ready-made. Let him once listen to the syren voice of delay—neglect to weigh anchor with the tide, and if he don't drift back with the current, go to pieces on a sand-bank, or be blown to

sticks by a foul wind, my name's not Jack. Let him keep a sharp eye upon the beginning, the middle, and the end of everything he undertakes. He must not tack about, like a fellow on a cruise or a roving commission, but, whatever wind blows, maintain a straight course, keeping his head to the port. Burns, the poet, spoke like a philosopher, when he said it was the misfortune of his life to be without an aim. But I tell you what, Dick, we must not only have an object to steer to, but it must be a reasonable object. A madman may say he is determined to go to the North Pole, or the moon—but that's not the thing, Dick; our anticipations must be likelihoods, our ambitions probabilities; but when we have made frequent calculations, and find ourselves correct in our reckoning, though we have made but little way, then down with despondency, and stick to perseverance. I don't mean a beggarly, servile, grovelling perseverance, but the unsubdued determination of an unconquerable spirit, riding out the storm, and while small craft sink on every side, disdaining to take in a single reef.

"Now, having said this much about shaping his course and laying in a freight, it is material that I drop a concluding word with regard to his rigging. Send him out with patched canvas, and the veriest punt that ever disgraced the water will clear out before him. A patch upon his coat will be an embargo on his prospects. People affect to despise tailors; but it is base ingratitude or shallow dissimulation. Not that I would for the world see my nevy an insignificant dandy, but remember, the moment the elbows of your coat open, every door shuts.

"But my fingers are cramped with this long epistle, and, moreover, the paper is full; and with love to my nevy George, Nelly, and the little ones, I am, dear Dick,

"Your affectionate Brother,

"John Rogers,

"Otherwise,

"Jack the Rambler."

All applauded this letter when they heard it, and they vowed the captain was a clever fellow—a noble fellow—ay, and a wise one; and they drank his health and a happy New Year to him, though half of what he had written, from his nautical types and symbols, was as Greek and Latin unto those who heard it, and worse unto George the genius, who read it; though some parts of it all understood.

When the health of Captain Rogers had gone round, "I wonder in the world," said Richard, "What it can be that my brother aye refers to about being unhappy? I've written to him fifty times to try to fathom it, but I never could—he never would gie me ony satisfaction."

"Why," said the seaman, as he sat leaning forward and turning round his sou'wester between his knees, "I believe I know, or I can guess a something about the matter. It's about ten years ago, according to my reckoning, we were coming down the Mediterranean, the captain was as fine a looking young fellow then as ever stood upon a deck. Well, as I was saying, we were coming down the Mediterranean, and at Genoa we took a gentleman and his daughter on board. She was a pretty creature; I've seen nothing like her neither before nor since. So, as I'm telling you, we took them on board at Genoa, for England, and they had not been many days on board, till every one saw, and I saw, though my eyes are none o' the smartest, that the captain could look on nothing but his lovely passenger. It wasn't hard to see that she looked much in the same way at him, and I have seen them walking on the deck at night with her arm through his, in the moonlight; and, let me tell you, a glorious sight it is—moonlight on the Mediterranean. It is enough to make a man fall in love with moonlight itself, if there be nothing else beside him. Well, d'ye see, as I am saying, it wasn't long until the old gentleman, her father, saw which way the land lay; and one day we heard the lady weeping; she never came out of her cabin during the rest of the voyage, nor did her father again speak to the master. We were laid up for a long time, and there was a report that the captain and her had married, unknowing to her father. However, we sailed on a long voyage; we weren't back to England again for more than twelve months; but the day after we landed, the captain shut himself up, and, for long and long, we used to find him sitting with the salt water in his eyes. We again heard the report that he had been married, and also that his lady had died in childbed; but whether the child was living or ever was living, or whether it was a boy or a girl, we didn't know; nor did he know; and, I believe, he never was able to hear any more about the old gentleman—so, as I say, that's all I know about the matter, poor fellow."

Now, the squinting sailor remained two days in the house of Richard Rogers, and he was such a comical man, and such a good-natured kind-hearted man, that Mrs. Rogers was certain he would be a lucky first-foot, even though he had

a very unfortunate cross look with his eyes; and she was the more convinced in this opinion, because, in a conversation she had had with him, and in which she had inquired—"What siller he thought the captain might be worth?" "Why, I'm saying," answered the sailor, "Captain Rogers is worth a round twenty thousand, if he be worth a single penny; and that, I'm thinking, is a pretty comfortable thing for Master George to be heir to!" "Ay, and so it is," responded Nelly. And there was no longer anything disagreeable in the sailor's squint.

Well, week followed week, and month succeeded month—spring came, and summer came, and harvest followed, and it was altogether a lucky year to Richard Rogers. Nelly declared that the squinting sailor had been an excellent first-foot.

Another year came, another, and another, until eight years passed round since they had been visited by the outlandish seaman. Nelly had had both lucky and unlucky first-feet. George the genius was now a lad of twenty, and the other children were well grown; but George was still a genius, and nothing but a genius. He was indeed a good scholar—a grand scholar, as his mother declared—and a great one, as his father affirmed. He had been brought up to no profession, for it was of no use thinking of a profession for one who was heir to twenty thousand pounds; and, at any rate, his genius was sure to make him a fortune. In what way his genius was to do this, was never taken into consideration. Many people said, "If we had your genius, George, we could make a fortune." And George thought he would and could. The joiner in the next village, however, said, that, "Wi' a' George's genius, he didna believe he could make an elshin-heft, and stick him!—and, in his opinion, there was mair to be made by making elshin-hefts than by writing ballants!"

As I have said, eight years had passed; it was again the last night of the year, and a very dark and stormy night it was. Mr. Rogers, his wife, their son George, and the rest of their family, had again seen the old year out and the new year in, and exchanged with each other the compliments of the season, when the cuckoo-clock again announced the hour of twelve. Nelly had "*happed* up the fire" with her own hands—a thing that she always did on the last night of the

old year, that it might not be out on a New Year's morning. She was again wondering who would be their first-foot, and expressing a hope that it would be a lucky one, when a chaise drew up before the house, and the driver, dismounting and knocking at the window, begged that they would favour him with a light, as the roads were exceedingly dark, and the lamps of the chaise had been completely blown out by the boisterous wind.

"A light!" exclaimed Nelly, half petrified at the request; "preserve us! is the man beside himsel!—do ye imagine that onybody is gaun to gie ye out a light the first thing in a New Year's morning! Gaè awa!—gae awa!"

In vain the driver expostulated—he had met with similar treatment at other houses at which he had called. "Ye hae nae business to travel at siccan a time o' night," replied Nelly to all his arguments. Her husband said little, for he entertained some of his wife's scruples against giving a light at such a time. George mildly ridiculed the absurdity of the refusal; but—"I am mistress o' my ain house," answered his mother, "and I'll gie a light out o't when I please, and only when I please. Wi' a' yer learnin', George, ye wad be a great fool sometimes."

The voice of a lady was now heard at the window with the driver, saying—"Pray, good people, do permit us to light the lamps, and you shall have any recompense." No sooner did George hear the lady's voice, than, in despite of his mother's frowns, he sprang to the door and unlocked it. With an awkward sort of gallantry he ushered in the fair stranger. She was, indeed, the loveliest first-foot that had ever crossed the threshold of Mrs. Rogers. She had no sooner entered, than Nelly saw and felt this, and, with a civility which formed à strange contrast to her answers to the driver, she smoothed down for her the cushioned arm-chair by the side of the fire. The young lady (for she hardly appeared to exceed seventeen) politely declined the proffered hospitality. "Sit down, my sweet young leddy; now, do sit down just to oblige me," said Nelly. "Ye are our first-foot, and I hope—I'm sure ye'll be a lucky ane; and ye wadna, ye canna gaun out without tasting wi' us on a New Year's morning."

The young lady sat down; and Nelly hastened to spread

upon the table little mountains of short bread (of which she was a notable maker) with her spice loaf, milk-scones, and her best ewe-cheese, and her cream-cheese, which was quite a fancy! And while his mother was so occupied, George produced three or four sorts of home-made wine of his own manufacture; for, in his catalogue of capabilities as a genius, it must be admitted that he had some which might be said to belong to the useful.

"Now, make yoursel at hame, my dear leddy," said Nelly; "need nae pressing. Or if ye wad like it better, I'll get ye ready a cup o' tea in a minute or twa; the kettle's boiling; and it's only to mask, so dinna say no. Indeed, if ye'll only consent to stop a' night, ye shall hae the best bed in the house, and we'll put the horses in the stable; for it's no owre and aboon lucky to gie or tak a light on a New Year's morning."

A faint smile played across the lips of the fair stranger, at the mixture of Nelly's kindness and credulity; and she thanked her for her hospitality, but stated that she must proceed on her journey, as she was hastening to the death-bed of a near and only relative. The young lady, however, sat longer than she wist, for she had entered into conversation with George—how, she knew not, and he knew not; but they were pleased with each other; and there were times (though it was only at times) that George could talk like an inspired being; and this was one of those times. The knowledge, the youth, the beauty of the lovely stranger, had kindled all the fires of his genius within him. Even his father was surprised, and his mother forgot that the chaise-driver was lighting the lamps; and how long the fair lady might have listened to George, we cannot tell, had not the driver hinted, "All's ready, ma'am; the horses will get no good in the cold." She arose and took leave of her entertainers; and George accompanied her to the chaise and shook her hand and bade her farewell, as though she had been an old and a very dear friend. He even thought, as she replied, "*farewell*," that there was an unmistaken sadness in her tone, as if she were sorry to say it.

Richard and his spouse retired to rest; but still the thought of having given a light out of her house on a New Year's morning troubled her, and she feared that, after all,

her lovely first-foot would prove an unlucky one. George laid his head upon his pillow to dream dreams, and conjure up visions of the fair stranger.

A short week had not passed, however—Richard was returning from Kelso market, the roads were literally a sheet of ice—it is said that bones are more easily broken in frosty weather—his horse fell and rolled over him, and he was carried home bruised, and with his leg broken. Nelly was loud in her lamentations, and yet louder in her upbraidings against George and against herself, that she permitted a light to be carried out of her house on a New Year's morning. "It was borne in upon me," said she, "the leddy wadna be lucky, that something would come out o' the gi'en the light!" But this was not all; before two months elapsed, and just as her husband was beginning to set his foot to the ground again, from friction and negligence together, the thrashing machine took fire. It was still a severe frost, there was scarce a drop of water to be procured about the place, and, in spite of the exertions of all the people on the farm, and their neighbours who came to their assistance, the fierce flames roared, spread and rushed from stack to stack, until the barn, the stables, the stack-yard, and the dwelling-house, presented a heap of smouldering ashes and smoking ruins. Yet this was not the worst evil which had that day fallen upon Richard Rogers. He was one of those individuals who have an aversion to the very name of a bank, and he had the savings and the profits of twenty years—in fifty pound notes, and in five pound notes, and crown pieces—locked away in a strong drawer in his bedroom. In the confusion of the fire, and as he bustled, halting about, with the hope of saving some of his wheat-stacks (for wheat was selling high at the time), he forgot the strong drawer and his twenty-years' savings, until flames were seen bursting from the window of his bedroom. The window had been left open, and some of the burning materials having been blown into the room, it was the first part of the house which caught fire.

"Oh! I'm ruined!—I'm ruined!" cried Richard; "my siller!—my siller!—my hard won siller!"

A rush was made to the bedroom; but before they reached it, the stairs gave way, the floor fell in, and a thick flame

and suffocating smoke buried the fruits of poor Richard's industry—the treasure which he had laid up for his children.

"Now, I am a beggar!" groaned he, lifting up his hands, while the flames almost scorched his face.

"Oh, black sorrow take that leddy!" cried Nelly, wringing her hands; "what tempted her to be my first-foot!—or what tempted me to gie her a light! George! George! it was a' you! We gied fire out o' the house, and now we've brought it about us! Waes me! waes me! I'm a ruined woman! O Richard! what will we do? what was ye thinking about that ye didna mind the siller?"

Richard knew nothing of the number of his notes, and his riches had, indeed, vanished in a flash of fire! He was now obliged to take shelter with his family in an out-house, which had been occupied by a cottar. He had not heard from Captain Rogers for more than twelve months, and he knew not where he was, therefore he could expect no immediate assistance from him. It was now necessary that George should bring his genius into action—his father could no longer support him in idleness; and, as it had always been said, that he had only to exert his genius to make a fortune, George resolved that he would exert it, and he was pleased with the thought of setting his father on his feet again by the reward of his talents. He had read somewhere in the writings of Dr. Johnson (and the Dr. had a good deal of experience in the matter), that "genius was *sure* to meet with its reward in London;" and, if the Doctor was *sure* of that, George was as *sure* that he was a genius, and therefore he considered the reward as certain. So George determined, as his uncle might live many years, that he would go to London and make a fortune for himself, and to assist his father in the meantime. A cow was taken to Kelso market and sold for eight pounds, and the money was given to George to pay his expenses to the metropolis, and to keep him there until his genuis should put him in the way of making the anticipated fortune. His coat was not exactly such a one as his uncle desired he should be sent out into the world in—not that it was positively a bad coat, but it was beginning to be rather smooth and clear about the elbows, a lighter shade run up on each side of the seams at the back, and his hat was be-

coming bare round the edges on the crown. To be sure, as his mother said, "he would aye hae ink beside him, and a dip o' ink would help to hide that." There, however, were things that could not be mended—the wardrobe of the whole family had been consumed at the fire; but these things did not distress George, for he did not consider it necessary for a genius to appear in a new coat. There were many tears shed on both sides when George bade adieu to his father, his mother, and his brethren, and took his journey towards London.

It was about the middle of March when he arrived in the metropolis; and, having spent two days wandering about and wondering at all he saw, without once thinking how his genius was to make the long-talked-of-fortune, on the third day he delivered a letter of introduction, which he had received, to a broker in the city. Now, it so happened, that in this letter poor George was spoken of as an "*extraordinary genius!*"

"So you are a *great genius*, young man, my friend informs me," said the broker; "what have you a genius for?"

George blushed and look confused; he almost said—"for everything;" but he hung his head and said nothing.

"Is it a genius for making machines—or playing the fiddle—or what?" added the broker.

George looked more and more confused; he replied—"that he could neither make machines, nor did he know anything of music."

"Then I hope it's not a genius for making ballads, is it?" continued the other.

"I have written ballads," answered George, hesitatingly.

"Oh, then, you must try the west end—you won't do for the city," added the broker; "your genius is an article that's not in demand here."

George left the office of the London citizen mortified and humiliated. For a dozen long years everybody had told him he was a genius; and now, when the question was put to him—"What had he a genius for?" he could not answer it. This rebuff rendered him melancholy for several days, and he wandered from street to street, sometimes standing unconscious of what he was doing, before the window of a bookseller, till, jostled by the crowd, he moved on, and again

took his stand before the window of the printseller, the jeweller, or the vendor of caricatures. Still, he believed that he was a genius, and he was conscious that that genius might make him a fortune; only he knew not how to apply it—he was puzzled where to begin. Yet he did not despair. He thought the day would come—but how it was to come, he knew not. He took out his uncle's letter, which his father put into his hands when he left him, and he read it again, and said, it was all very good, but what was he the better of it?—it was all very true—too true, for he understood every word of it now; and he turned round his arm and examined his coat with a sigh, and beheld that the lining was beginning to show its unwelcome face through the seams of the elbows. I should have told you that he was then sitting in a coffee-house, sipping his three halfpence worth of coffee, and *kitchening* his pennyworth of bread, which was but half a slice, slightly buttered—and a thin slice, too, compared with those of his mother's cutting. He was beginning to feel one of the first rewards of genius—*eating by measure!* To divert the melancholy of his feelings, and the gloom of his prospects, he took up a magazine which lay on the table before him. His eyes fell upon the review of a poem which had been lately published, and for which the author was said to have received a thousand guineas! "*A thousand guineas!*" exclaimed George, dropping the magazine—"*A thousand guineas!* I shall make a fortune yet!" He had read some of the extracts from the poem—he was sure he could write better lines—his eyes flashed with ecstacy—his very nostrils distended with delight—a thousand guineas seemed already in his pocket! Though, alas! out of the eight pounds which he had received as the price of his father's cow, with all his management and with all his economy, he had but eight shillings left. But his resolution was taken—he saw fortune hovering over him with her golden wings—he purchased a quire of paper and half a dozen quills, and hurried to his garret—for his lodging *was* a garret, in which there was nothing but an old bed and an older chair—not even an apology for a table—but sometimes the bed served the purpose of one, and at other times he sat upon the floor like a Turk, and wrote upon the chair. He was resolved to write

an epic—for the idea of a thousand guineas had taken possession of all his faculties. He made a pen—he folded the paper—he rubbed his hands across his brow for a subject. He might have said with Byron (had Byron then said it),

"I want a hero!"

He thought of a hundred subjects, and with each the idea of his mother's beautiful but most unlucky first-foot was mingled! At length he fixed upon one, and began to write. He wrote most industriously—in short, he wrote for a thousand guineas! He tasked himself to four hundred lines a day, and, in a fortnight, he finished a poem containing about five thousand. It was longer than that for which the thousand guineas had been given; but George thought, though he should get no more for his, that even a thousand guineas was very good payment for a fortnight's labour. Of the eight shillings which we mentioned his being in possession of when he began the epic, he had now but threepence, and he was in arrears for the week's rent of his garret. The landlady began to cast very suspicious glances at her lodger—she looked at him with the sides of her eyes. She did not know exactly what a genius meant, but she had proof positive it did not mean a gentleman. At times, also, she would stand with his garret-door in her hand, as if she intended to say—"Mr. Rogers, I would thank you for last week's rent."

Scarce was the ink dry upon the last page of his poem, when George, folding up the manuscript, put it carefully into his coat pocket, and hurried to the bookseller of whom he had read that he had given a thousand guineas for a shorter work, and one too that, he was satisfied in his own mind, was every way inferior to his. We do not say that he exactly expected the publisher to fall down and worship him the moment he read the first page of his production, but he did believe that he would regard him as a prodigy, and at once offer terms for the copyright. He was informed by a shopman, however, that the publisher was engaged, and he left the manuscript, stating that he would call again. George did call again, and yet again, trembling with hope and anxiety; and he began to discover that a great London publisher was as difficult of access as his imperial mighti-

ness the Emperor of China. At length, by accident, he found the Bibliopole in his shop. He gave a glance at George—it was a withering glance—a glance at his coat and at his elbows. The unfortunate genius remembered, when it was too late, the passage in his uncle's letter—"the moment the elbows of your coat open, every door shuts." We have already mentioned that the lining was beginning to peer through them, and, during the fervour of inspiration, or the *furor* of excitement in composing the epic, he had not observed that the rent had become greater, that the lining too had given way, and that now his linen (which was not of a snow colour) was visible. He inquired after his manuscript. "What is it?" asked the cosmopolitan publisher.

"A poem," answered George—"an epic!" The man of books smiled—he gave another look at the forlorn visage of the genius—it was evident he measured the value of his poetry by the value of his coat. "A poem!" replied he—"poetry's a drug! It is of no use for individuals in your position to think about writing poetry. Give the young man his manuscript," said he to the shopman, and walked away.

The reader may imagine the feelings of our disappointed genius—they were bitter as the human soul could bear. Yet he did not altogether despair; there were more booksellers in London. It is unnecessary to tell how he offered his manuscript to another and another, yea, to twenty more—how he examined what books they had published in their windows—and how he entered their shops with fear and trembling, for his hopes were becoming fainter and more faint. Some opened it, others did not, but all shook their heads and said—nobody would undertake to publish poetry, or, that it was not in their way; some advised him to publish by subscription, but George Rogers did not know a soul in London; others recommended him to try the magazines. It was with a heavy heart that he abandoned the idea of publishing his epic, and with it also his fond dream of obtaining a thousand guineas. He had resolved within himself, that the moment he received the money, he would go down to Scotland and rebuild his father's house; and all who knew him should marvel, and hold up their hands at the fame and the fortune of George the Genius.

But a hungry man cannot indulge in day-dreams, and his visions by night are an aggravation of his misery; he therefore had to renounce the fond delusion, that he might have bread to eat. His last resource was to try the magazines. His epic was out of the question for them, and he wrote songs, odes, essays, and short tales, on every scrap of paper, and on the back of every letter in his possession. With his bundle of "shreds and patches," he waited upon several magazine publishers. One told him that he was overstocked with contributions; another, that he might leave the papers, and he should have an answer in two or three weeks. But three weeks was an eternity to a man who had not tasted food for three days. A third said "he could seldom make room for new contributors—poetry was not an article for which he gave money—essays were at a discount, and he only published tales by writers of established reputation." There was one article, however, which pleased him, and he handed George a guinea for it. The tears started into his eyes as he received it—he thought he would never be poor again—he was as proud of that guinea as if it had been a thousand! It convinced him more and more that he *was* a genius. I need not tell how that guinea was husbanded, and how it was doled out; but, although George reckoned that it would purchase two hundred and fifty-two penny loaves—and that was almost as many as a man need to eat in a twelvemonth—yet the guinea vanished to the last penny before a month went round.

He had frequently called at the shop of his first patron, the publisher of the Magazine; and one day when he so called—"O Mr. Rogers," said the bookseller, "I have just heard of a little job which will suit you. Lord L—— wishes me to find him a person to write a pamphlet in defence of the war. You are just the person to do it. Make it pungent and peppery, and it will be five or ten guineas for you, and perhaps the patronage of his lordship—and you know that nowadays no bookseller will look at genius without patronage."

A new light broke upon George—he discovered why his epic had been rejected. He hurried to his garret. He began the pamphlet with the eagerness of frenzy. It was both peppery and passionate. Before the afternoon of the

following day it was completed, and he flew with it to the house of the nobleman. Our genius was hardly, as the reader may suppose, in a fitting garb for the drawing-room or library of a British peer, and the pampered menial who opened the door attempted to dash it back in his face. He, however, neither lacked spirit or strength, and he forced his way into the lobby.

"Inform his lordship," said George, "that Mr. Rogers has called with pamphlet in Defence of the War!" And he spoke this with an air of consequence and authority.

The man of genius was ushered into the library of the literary lord, who, raising his glass to his eye, surveyed him from head to foot with a look partaking of scorn and disgust; and there was no mistaking that its meaning was—"Stand back!" At length, he desired our author to remain where he was, and to read his manuscript. The chagrin which he felt at this reception, marred the effect of the first two or three sentences, but, as he acquired his self-possession, he read with excellent feeling and emphasis. Every sentence told. "Good! good!" said the peer, rubbing his hands—"that will do!—excellent!—give me the manuscript!"

George was stepping boldly forward to the chair of his lordship, when the latter, rising, stretched his arm at its extreme length across the table, and received the manuscript between his finger and thumb, as though he feared contagion from the touch of the author, or fancied that the plague was sewed up between the seams of his threadbare coat. The peer glanced his eye over the title-page, which George had not read—*A Defence of the War with France*," said he; "by —by who!—the deuce!—George Rogers!—who is George Rogers?"

"I am, your lordship," answered the author.

"You are!—you!" said his lordship, "you the author of *the Defence!* Impertinent fool! had not you the idea from me? Am not I to pay you for it? The work is mine! So saying he rang the bell, and addressing the servant who entered, added—"Give that gentleman a guinea."

George withdrew in rage and bewilderment, and his poverty, not his will, consented to accept the insulting remuneration. Within two days, he saw at the door of every book-

seller, a placard with the words—"*Just Published*, A DEFENCE OF THE WAR WITH FRANCE, *by the Right Hon. Lord L——*." George compared himself to Esau, who sold his birthright for a mess of pottage—he had bartered his name, his fame, and the fruits of his genius, for a paltry guinea.

He began to be ashamed of the shabbiness of his garments —the withering meaning of the word clung round him—he felt it was a festering sore eating into his very soul, and he appeared but little upon the streets. He had been several weeks without a lodging, and though it was now summer, the winds of heaven afford but a comfortless blanket for the shoulders when the midnight dews fall upon the earth. He had slept for several nights in a hayfield in the suburbs, on the Kent side of the river; and his custom was, to lift a few armfuls aside on a low rick, and laying himself down in the midst of it, gradually placing the hay over his feet, and the rest of his body, until the whole was covered. But the hay season did not last for ever; and one morning, when fast asleep in the middle of the rick, he was aroused by a sudden exclamation of mingled horror and astonishment. He looked up, and beside him stood a countryman, with his mouth open, and his eyes gazing wistfully. In his hand he held a hayfork, and on the prongs of the fork was one of the skirts of poor George's coat! He gazed angrily at the countryman, and ruefully at the fragment of his unfortunate coat; and, rising, he drew round the portion of it that remained on his back, to view "the rent the envious *hayfork* had made."

"By goam! chap," said the countryman, when he regained his speech, "I have made thee a spencer; but I might have run the fork through thee, and it would have been no blame of mine."

They were leading the hay from the field, and the genius was deprived of his lodging. It was some nights after this, he was wandering in the neighbourhood of Poplar, fainting and exhausted—sleeping, starting, dreaming—as he dragged his benumbed and wearied limbs along; and, as he was crossing one of the bridges over the canal, he saw one of the long fly-boats, which ply with goods to Birmingham and Manchester, lying below it. George climbed over the bridge and dropped into the boat, and finding a quantity of painted sailcloth near the head of the boat,

which was used as a covering for the goods, to protect them from the weather, he wrapped himself up in it, and lay down to sleep. How long he lay he knew not, for he slept most soundly; and when he awoke, he felt more refreshed than he had been for many nights. But he started as he heard the sound of voices near him, and, cautiously withdrawing the canvas from over his face, he beheld that the sun was up; and, to increase his perplexity, fields, trees, and hedges were gliding past him. While he slept, the boatmen had put the horses to the barge, and were now on their passage to Birmingham, and several miles from London; but though they had passed and repassed the roll of canvas, they saw not, and they suspected not that they "carried Cæsar and his fortunes." George speedily comprehended his situation; and extricating his limbs from the folds of the canvas as quietly as he could, he sprang to his feet, stepped to the side of the boat, and, with a desperate bound, reached the bank of the canal.

"Hollo!" shouted the astonished boatmen. "Hollo! what have you been after?"

George made no answer, but ran with his utmost speed down the side of the canal.

"Hollo! stop thief!—stop thief!" bellowed the boatmen; and, springing to the ground, they gave chase to the genius. The boys, also, who rode the horses that dragged the boat, unlinked them and joined in the pursuit. It was a noble chase! But when George found himself pursued, he left the side of the canal, and took to the fields, clearing hedge, ditch, fence, and stone-wall, with an agility that would have done credit to a first-rate hunter. The horses were at fault in following his example, and the boys gave up the chase; and when the boatmen had pursued him for the space of half a mile, finding they were losing ground at every step, they returned, panting and breathless to their boat. George, however, slackened his pace but little until he arrived at the Edgeware road, and there he resumed his wonted slow and melancholy saunter, and sorrowfully returned towards London. He now, poor fellow, sometimes shut his eyes to avoid the sight of his own shadow, which he seemed to regard as a caricature of his forlorn person; and, in truth, he now appeared miserably forlorn—I had almost

said ludicrously so. His coat has been already mentioned, with its wounded elbows, and imagine it now with the skirt which had been torn away with the hayfork, when the author of an epic was nearly forked upon a cart as he reposed in a bundle of hay—imagine now the coat with that skirt awkwardly pinned to it—fancy also that the button-holes had become useless, and that all the buttons, save two, had taken leave of his waistcoat—his trousers, also, were as smooth at the knees as though they had been glazed and hot-pressed, and they were so bare, so very bare, that the knees could almost be seen through them without spectacles. Imagine, also, that this suit had once been black, and that it had changed colours with the weather, the damp hay, the painted canvass, and the cold earth on which he slept; and, add to this, a hat, the brim of which was broken, and the crown fallen in—with shoes, the soles of which had departed, and the heels involuntarily bent down, as if ready to perform the service of slippers. Imagine, these things, and you have a personification of George Rogers as he now, sad and sorrowful, wended his way towards London.

He had reached the head of Oxford Street, and he was standing irresolute whether to go into the city or turn into the Park, to hide himself from the eyes of man, and to lie down in solitude with his misery, when a lady and a gentleman crossed the street to where he stood. Their eyes fell upon him—the lady started—George beheld her, and he started too—he felt his heart throb, and a blush burn over his cheek. He knew her at the first glance—it was the fair stranger—his mother's first-foot! He turned round—he hurried towards the Park—he was afraid—he was ashamed to look behind him. A thousand times had he wished to meet that lady again, and now he had met her, and he fled from her—the shame of his habiliments entered his soul. Still he heard footsteps behind him, and he quickened his pace. He had entered the Park, but yet he heard the sound of the footsteps following.

"Stop, young man!" cried a voice from behind him. But George walked on, as though he heard it not. The word "stop!" was repeated; but, instead of doing so, he was endeavouring to hurry onward, when, as we have said, one

of the shoes which had become slippers, and which were bad before, but worse from his flight across the ploughed fields, came off, and he was compelled to stop and stoop, to put it again upon his foot, or to leave his shoe behind him. While he stopped, therefore, to get the shoe again upon his foot, the person who followed him came up—it was the gentleman whom he had seen with the fair unknown. With difficulty he obtained a promise from George that he would call upon him at his house in Pimlico in the afternoon; and when he found our genius too proud to accept of money, he thrust into the pocket of the memorable skirt, which the hayfork had torn from the parent cloth, all the silver which he had upon his person.

When the gentleman had left him, George burst into tears. They were tears of pride, of shame, and of agony.

At length, he took the silver from the pocket of his skirt; he counted it in his hand—it amounted to nearly twenty shillings. Twenty shillings will go farther in London than in any city in the world with those who know how to spend it—but much depends upon that. By all the by-ways he could find, George wended his way down to Rosemary Lane, where the "*Black and Blue Reviver*" worketh miracles, and where the children of Israel are its high priests. Within an hour, wonderful was the metamorphosis upon the person of George Rogers. At eleven o'clock he was clothed as a beggar—at twelve he was shabby genteel. The hat in ruins was replaced by one of a newer shape, and that had been brushed and ironed till it was as clear as a looking-glass. The skirtless coat was thrown aside for an olive-coloured one of metropolitan cut, with a velvet collar, and of which, as the Israelite who sold it said, "de *glosh* was not off." The buttonless vest was laid aside for one of a light colour, and the place of the decayed trousers was supplied by a pair of pure white; yea, his feet were enclosed in sheep-skin shoes, which, he was assured, had never been upon foot before. Such was the change produced upon the outer man of George Rogers through twenty shillings; and, thus arrayed, with a beating and an anxious heart, he proceeded in the afternoon to the home of the beautiful stranger who had been the eventful first-foot in his father's house. As he crossed the Park by the side of the Serpentine, he could not avoid stop-

ping to contemplate, perhaps I should say admire, the change that had been wrought upon his person, as it was reflected in the water as in a mirror. When he had arrived at Pimlico, and been ushered into the house, there was surprise on the face of the gentleman as he surveyed the change that had come over the person of his guest; but in the countenance of the young lady there was more of delight than of surprise. When he had sat with them for some time, the gentleman requested that he would favour them with his history and his adventures in London. George did so from the days of his childhood, until the day when the fair lady before him became his mother's first-foot; and he recounted also his adventures and his struggles in London, as we have related them; and, as he spoke, the lady wept. As he concluded, he said—"And, until this day, I have ever found an expression, which my uncle made in a letter, verified, that 'the moment the elbows of my coat opened, every door would shut.'"

"Your uncle!" said the gentleman, eagerly; "who is he?—what is his name?"

"He commands a vessel of his own in the merchant service," replied George, "and his name is John Rogers."

"John Rogers!" added the gentleman; "and your father's name?"

"Richard Rogers," answered George.

The young lady gazed upon him anxiously; and words seemed leaping to her tongue, when the gentleman prevented her, saying, "Isabel, love, I wish to speak with this young man in private," and she withdrew. When they were left alone, the gentleman remained silent for a few minutes, at times gazing in the face of George, and again placing his hand upon his brow. At length he said—"I know your uncle, and I am desirous of serving you—he also will assist you if you continue to deserve it. But you must give up book-making as a business; and you must not neglect business for book-making. You understand me. I shall give you a letter to a gentleman in the city, who will take you into his counting-house; and if, at the expiration of three months, I find your conduct has been such as to deserve my approbation, you shall meet me here again."

He then wrote a letter, which, having sealed, he put it,

with a purse, into the hands of George, who sat speechless with gratitude and astonishment.

On the following day George delivered the letter to the merchant, and was immediately admitted as a clerk into his counting-house. He was ignorant of the name of his uncle's friend; and when he ventured to inquire at the merchant respecting him, he merely told him, he was one whose good opinion he would not advise him to forfeit. In this state of suspense, George laboured day by day at the desk; and although he was most diligent, active, and anxious to please, yet, frequently, when he was running up figures, or making out an invoice, his secret thoughts were of the fair Isabel—the daughter of his uncle's friend, and his mother's first-foot. He regretted that he did not inform her father that he was his uncle's heir—he might then have been admitted to his house, and daily seen her on whom his thoughts dwelt. His situation was agreeable enough—it was paradise to what he had experienced; yet the three months of his probation seemed longer than twelve.

He had been a few weeks employed in the counting-house, when he received a letter from his parents. His father informed him that he had received a letter from his uncle, who was then in London; but, added he, "he has forgotten to give us his direction, where we may write to him, or where ye may find him." His mother added an important postscript, in which she informed him, that "She was sorry she was right after a', that there wasna luck in a squintin' first-foot; for he would mind o' the sailor that brought the letter, that said he was to be his uncle's heir; and now it turned out that his uncle had found an heir o' his ain."

It was the intention of George, when he had read the letter to go to the house of his benefactor, and inquire for his uncle's address, or the name of the ship; but when he reflected that he might know neither—that he was not to return to his house for three months, nor until he was sent for—and, above all, when he thought that he was no longer his uncle's heir, and that he now could offer up no plea for looking up to the lovely Isabel—he resumed his pen with a stifled sigh, and abandoned the thought of finding out his uncle for the present.

He had been rather more than ten weeks in the office, when the unknown Isabel entered and inquired for the merchant. She smiled upon George as she passed him—the smile entered his very soul, and the pen shook in his hand. It was drawing towards evening, and the merchant requested George to accompany the young lady home. Joy and agitation raised a tumult in his breast—he seized his hat—he offered her his arm—but he scarce knew what he did. For half an hour he walked by her side without daring or without being able to utter a single word. They entered the Park; the lamps were lighted amidst the trees along the Mall, and the young moon shone over them. It was a lovely and an imposing scene, and with it George found a tongue. He dwelt upon the effect of the scenery—he quoted passages from his own epic—and he spoke of the time when his fair companion was his mother's first-foot. She informed him that she was then hastening to the deathbed of her grandfather, whom she believed to be the only relative that she had in life—that she arrived in time to receive his blessing, and that, with his dying breath, he told her her father yet lived—and, for the first time, she heard his name, and had found him. George would have asked what that name was, but when he attempted to do so he hesitated, and the question was left unfinished. They spoke of many things, and often they walked in silence; and it was not until the watchman called—"Past nine o'clock," that they seemed to discover that, instead of proceeding towards Pimlico, they had been walking backward and forward upon the Mall. He accompanied her to her father's door, and left her with his heart filled with unutterable thoughts.

The three months had not quite expired, when the anxiously-looked-for invitation arrived, and George Rogers was to dine at the house of his uncle's friend—the father of the fair Isabel. I shall not describe his feelings as he hastened along the streets towards Pimlico. He arrived at the house, and his hand shook as he reached it to the rapper. The door was opened by a strange-looking footman. George thought that he had seen him before—it was indeed a face that, if once seen, was not easily forgotten—the footman had not such large whiskers as [illegible] Sowers, but the

of the same colour, and they certainly were the same eyes that had frightened his mother in the head of her first-foot. He was shown into a room where Isabel and her father waited to receive him. "When I last saw you, sir," said the latter, "you informed me you were the nephew of John Rogers. He finds he has no cause to be ashamed of you. George, my dear fellow, your uncle Jack gives you his hand! Isabel, welcome your cousin!" "My cousin!" cried George. "My cousin!" said Isabel. What need we say more—before the New Year came, they went down to Scotland a wedded pair, to be his mother's first-foot in the farm-house which had been rebuilt.

THE PERSECUTED ELECTOR;

OR,

PASSAGES FROM THE LIFE OF SIMON GOURLAY.

BE not afraid, most courteous reader: you will find nothing of party politics in the following Passages from the Life of Simon Gourlay. Know, then, that Simon was a douce, respectable member of the town-council in the burgh of L——; and it was his lot or his misfortune, as he affirmed, to be a sorely persecuted elector. But we must allow Simon to narrate the history of his persecutions in his own words. "Weel," he was wont to begin, "though I verily believe I am ane o' the most moderate men breathing, and although I seldom or never fashed my head about either Whig or Tory, I am firmly persuaded there's no a man living that has suffered mair frae baith parties; they hae kicked me about as though I had been a sort o' political footba'. Ye must understand that I am ane o' the principal men in our toun-council, o' which my faither was a distinguished member afore me. By virtue o' my office, I had a vote for a member o' parliament to represent our ancient burgh; and it had been the advice o' my worthy faither to me, owre and owre again—'Simon,' he used to say, 'if ye some day live to hae the honour o' being called to the council, remember my maxim—aye vote for the winning side. Mind ye this, if ye wish yer kail to be well lithed, or to enjoy the respect o' yer neighbours.' Now, as I hae said, my faither was a very respectable man; he was meikle looked up to in the town, and his word, I may say, was the law o' the council; indeed, he had a most wonderfully

impressive manner o' delivering himsel'; and when he began to speak, ye wad hae said it was a minister preaching; but, in the coorse o' nature, he died, having adhered to his maxim through life, and I succeeded him in the business. Now, it was some years after this, and after I had been called to the council, there was an election took place for the burgh. There were two candidates—a Mr. Wood, and a Captain Oliver belonging to the navy. They were both remarkably pleasant weel-spoken gentlemen; as to their politics, I knew very little about them, for, as my faither used to observe, it was a very unbecoming thing for the like o' us, that had only ae vote, to ask ony gentleman about his principles. Weel, it was at this election that my persecutions began; and sorry am I to say that they had their beginning, too, in my own family. One day I was in the shop serving some customers, and, before I was aware, Mr. Wood's carriage stopped at the door. For onything I ken, his politics were the same as those o' Captain Oliver; but, somehow or another, he was exceedingly popular in the toun, and the laddies had '*Wood for ever!*' written on the wa's and window-shutters, wi' bits o' chalk. There was a crowd came rinning, and cheered round about the carriage at the shop door; for Mr. Wood generally threw awa a handful or twa o' siller amongst them. I wad hae slipped into the parlour to been out o' the way, had it no been that folk were in the shop, and I saw there was naething for it but to stand fire. Weel, as I'm telling ye, Mr. Wood and twa or three ither gentlemen came into the shop; and really he was a very pleasant, affable gentleman, wi' a great deal o' manners and condescension about him. I was much interested wi' his look, and a good deal at a loss what to say. There was nae pride about him whatever; but he just came in, and took my hand as familiarly as if I had been his equal, and we had been acquainted for twenty years.

"'I have the honour of soliciting your vote and interest at the approaching election, Mr. Gourlay,' says he.

"'Weel, really sir,' says I, 'as my faither afore me used to observe, I'll tak' the matter into consideration—it's best no to be in a hurry; but I'll be very happy—that is, it will afford me a great deal o' pleasure if I can obleege ye; but—I'm rather unprepared—ye hae taen me unawares.'

"'Well, I trust I may reckon upon you as a friend,' said he—'I shall be very proud of Mr. Gourlay's support.'

"'Why, sir,' says I, 'as my worthy faither'——And just as I said this, some o' the youngsters about the doors set up a titter and a hiss. It was very provoking for a magistrate to be laughed at in his ain shop, by a parcel o' idle blackguard, half-grown laddies; an', 'Ye young scoundrels, says I, 'I'll put half-a-dizen o' ye in the blackhole. And, wi' this, the young persecutors hissed and tittered the mair, and set up a shout o' derision. It was vexatious beyond measure; and, as I was saying, I didna ken weel what to do, for there were folk in the shop; and, as Mr. Wood and the gentlemen that were wi' him, pressed me to say definitely whether I wad gie him a vote, I observed Persecution also shaking its neive at me frae the parlour! For, ye'll observe, that it was also my misfortune to be plagued wi' ane o' the sairest trials o' Job—an ill-tempered, domineering woman for a wife. She was my second wife, and mony a time hae I said, when she vexed me beyond what my spirit could bear, that I could gang to the kirkyard, and pick the remains o' my dear first partner frae the cauld grave, bane by bane, could it restore her to my bosom again, or free me frae the persecution o' her that had succeeded her. Weel, as I was saying, while Mr. Wood and his friends were pressing me, I threw a glent at the parlour door, which was half glass, wi' a curtain ahint it, and got a glance o' Mrs. Gourlay standing shaking her head and her neive, as meikle as to say, 'Gie him a vote at your peril, Simon!' Whether my face betrayed ony visible tokens o' my inward agony or no, I canna say, but it so happened that the confounded callants had got a peep at Mrs. Gourlay ahint the parlour door, as weel as me, and the young rascals, having seen her manœuvres, cried out—'*Three cheers for Mrs. Gourlay!*' The cheers gaed through my ears like a knife—weel did I ken that they would be rung through them for a week to come! I can hardly tell you how Mr. Wood and the gentlemen left the shop! but their backs werena weel turned till a quick rap cam upon the glass at the parlour window; and a quicker voice cried —'Gourlay, ye're wanted.' I desired the lads to attend to

the customers, and I slipped awa ben to the parlour. There sat her leddyship, just like a tempest ready to burst.

"'Ay, man!—ye simpleton!—ye nosiewax! cried she; 'and ye'll hae the impudence to gie a vote without consulting me!—ye'll say, as yer silly auld faither said'——

"'Come, Mrs. Gourlay,' says I, 'ye may carry yer cantrips upon me as far as ye like, but ye shanna, in my hearing, breathe a word against the memory o' my worthy faither.'

"'And ye sha'na vote for Wood,' cried she—'or I'll keep ye in het water to the end o' yer days.'

"'Really, my dear,' says I, 'I think ye keep me in het water as it is. But I hae gien nae vote as yet; and, as my worthy faither used to observe'——

"'The mischief tak ye and yer faither!' cried she; 'can ye no speak without aye bleth'rin' aboot him!'

"'Mrs. Gourlay!' says I, 'I've warned ye'——

"'Simon Gourlay!' cried she, 'I've cautioned ye'——

"And just as the altercation was like to run very high, and to become very unseemly, another carriage drew up to the door, and out came Captain Oliver and his friends. The Captain was a pleasant gentleman, also, and very honest like. My wife flew and opened the parlour door; and in an instant she put on such a hypocritical, weel-pleased look. 'Mercy!' thinks I, 'what's that o't?—a woman can change her countenance quicker than a northern light, which glimmers and vanishes before you can say Jack Robertson!' Weel, I hastily rubbed my face wi' my pocket handkerchief, and made a step forward to the glass to see how I looked; for I thought it would be very unbecoming in a member o' the council, and a magistrate o' the burgh, to be seen in a flurry, or as if he had been flytin'. I watna whether the Captain had heard that 'the grey mare was the better horse,' in my house or no; for there were evil-disposed persons malicious enough to say such a thing; but he came straight forward to Mrs. Gourlay; and—

"'I am most happy to see you, Mrs. Gourlay,' said he; 'I trust I shall have the honour of *your* interest. I know I have nothing to fear if I have the good wishes of the ladies upon my side; and, without vanity, ma'am, I believe I have them.'

"'My termagant smiled and curtsied to the very floor.

'Pray, step in, Captain,' said she—'step in, gentlemen; Mr. Gourlay is within. I am sure you have *our* vote; I answer for that.'

"'My blood boiled; I felt indignation warm upon my face. I was stepping forward to pull her by the gown, when the Captain and his friends entered.

"'I am very much obliged to you, Mr. Gourlay,' said he, 'for the very handsome manner in which you have given me your support.'

"'Not all obliged to me, sir,' said I; 'but—but'——

"'Mrs. Gourlay gave me a look; and its meaning needed no words to interpret it.

"'Thank you, sir—thank you,' said the Captain; I am indeed obliged, very much obliged, for the frank and handsome manner in which you have given me your'——

"'Excuse me, Captain,' says I; 'but I would wish a little time just to consider—to mak up my mind, as it were; for, as my faither'——

"'Dinna detain the Captain,' interrupted my wife; 'he didna ken your faither: ye must not mind my goodman, gentlemen,' said she; 'he wad aye be considering and considering—but just put down his name, and nae mair about it. He daurna but vote for ye.'

"'Daurna! Mrs. Gourlay,' says I; 'that's very improper language to use to the like o' me.'

"'Ay, help us! the like o' you, indeed, Simon!' said she. 'Just put down his name, as I'm telling ye, gentlemen.'

"'I kenned it would be imprudent in a man o' my respectability to flee into a passion, and so held my tongue; and the Captain turning to me, said—

"'Good morning, sir; and I assure you I am much obliged to you.' And, turning round to my wife and shaking her hand, he added—'and many thanks to *you*, ma'am.'

"'You are welcome, sir,' said she; 'very welcome to half a dozen votes, if we had them.'

"'What took place between us after the Captain and his party left, I will not relate to ye, for it was very disgraceful—I'm ashamed o't until this day; indeed I carried the marks o' her nails upon my face for the space o' a fortnight, which looked particularly ill upon the countenance o' a magistrate. Weel, it was in the afternoon o' the same day,

ane o' the gentlemen belonging to Mr. Wood's party, called again at the shop ; and me being in the haberdashery line, he wished to purchase a quantity o' ribbons for election favours. To the best o' my recollection, he bought to the amount o' between twa and three pounds' worth ; and, to my surprise, he pulled out a fifty pound bank note to pay for them.

"'I fear, sir,' says I, 'I'm short o' change ; an ye can pay for the ribbons ony day as ye're passing.'

"'Oh, no,' says he, 'don't talk about the change—it can be got at any time.' And he laid the fifty pound note upon the counter. 'I trust,' added he, 'we may now reckon upon Mr. Gourlay's support.'

"'Really, sir,' says I, 'I have not had time to weigh—that is, to turn over the subject in my mind properly ; but I will consider of it. I am sure Mr. Wood has my good wishes.'

"'Thank you, sir,' said the gentleman, leaving the shop, 'I shall inform Mr. Wood that he may reckon upon you.'

"Now, I would have called after him, that he was by no means to reckon upon onything o' the sort, for I had not made up my mind ; but I thought it would look ill, and I suffered him to leave with the impression that I was a supporter o' his party. I couldna think for a moment that he proposed onything to a man like me by no taking the change o' the note ; and I intended to send it to the inn in the morning as soon as the Bank opened ; but I happened to say, in the course o' conversation, to a neebor that dropped into the shop a short while after, that I thought Mr. Wood was very liberal and flush o' siller ; and I unthinkingly mentioned the circumstance o' the fifty pound note. and the change, and the ribbons. Weel, the person left the shop without making any particular remark upon the circumstance that I observed ; but what was my horror, I may say my confusion and astonishment, when, just on the edge o' the evening (for it was in the summer time), and just as we were shutting up the shop, here's a great gilravishing and a shouting at the end o' the street, and alang comes twa or three hundred callants, and some young chields that were never out o' mischief, wi' the effigy o' a man tied to a pole ; and they had the odious thing dressed as like me as possible ; but what was worse than a', they had a great label on its breast, wi' the words, '*Fifty pounds for a pirn o' ribbons !*'

written on it; and they had the audacity to stand shouting and yelling, and to burn it afore my door. I was in such a passion as I believe man never was in afore! Me! a magistrate, and ane o' the principal men o' the town-council, to be thought guilty o' takin' a bribe! It was horrible! horrible! I first seized the yardwand, and I rushed into the crowd, and laid round me right and left, until it was shivered to pieces; and then I ran into the shop, while the mob kept hissing and yelling; and I took the fifty-pound note, and gied it to ane o' the shop-lads—'Rin,' says I, 'rin wi' that to Mr. Wood, or to the gentleman that brought it, and tell them I neither wish to see their money nor their custom.'

"So the lad ran wi' the note to the inn, and did as I ordered him. But, oh! I had an awfu' nicht wi' Mrs. Gourlay. There wasna an ill name that she could get her tongue about that she didna ca' me. 'Silly Simon!' and 'Simple Simon!' were the gentlest terms that she used. I was ashamed to show my face at the door, for I was the toun's talk. But, still, notwithstanding a' the persecution I was sufferin', I was in a swither hoo to act, for I was determined, if possible, to abide by my worthy faither's advice, an' vote wi' the winning side. However, it was hard to say which would be the winning side; for, though Mr. Wood was a great favourite wi' a majority o' the working-classes, and even wi' a number o' the council, an' though he was very liberal an' lavish wi' his money, as I have said, yet there was a great number o' respectable folk took a very warm interest for Captain Oliver. There were a vast o' my best customers on baith sides, and it was really a very delicate matter for me to decide hoo to act—for ye will observe, I am the last man in the world that would offend onybody, and especially a person that I'm obleeged to. Weel, just while I was pondering the matter, and considering in which way my worthy faither would have acted under similar circumstances, I received a letter in the name o' three or four leddies, from whom I had, first and last, received a great deal o' siller—and who, at the same time, were gey deeply in my books—and they plainly informed me that, unless I voted for Captain Oliver, they never, while they lived, would buy a sixpence worth o' goods in my shop again. I thought it was very hard for a respectable

merchant and a toun-councillor to be so persecuted and beset; and just while I was sitting very sair perplexed, in comes the postman wi' another letter. It was frae a Glasgow manufacturer that I had lang had dealings wi'; and he trusted that I would oblige him by voting for his friend, Mr. Wood; or, if not, that I would make it convenient to pay off his bill within three days, or that he would find it necessary to adopt means to obtain payment. This was worse and worse; and I must inform you that the account which he had against me never would have been due but for the extravagance o' my second Mrs. Gourlay. I was in a state o' misery indescribable. I wished frae the bottom o' my heart that I had been a hand-loom weaver, workin' for a shilling a-day, rather than toun-councillor; for then I micht hae been independent. However, my wife seemed determined to tak the mastership in the business a'thegither; an', what wi' the talkin' o' the toun, the threatening o' customers and creditors, and her everlasting scolding, I really was greatly to be pitied. The youngsters had bonfires round the toun in honour o' the different candidates, and I had an excellent peat-stack behind the house. Weel, when I gaed out in the morning, what should be the first thing I observed, but that the half o' my peat-stack was carried off bodily! 'Confound ye for a parcel o' persecuting thieves,' said I to mysel, 'but some o' ye shall get transportation for this, as sure as I'm a magistrate!' However, upon second thoughts, and as I had nae doubt but they had been carried off for the bonfires, and as it was likely that they wad be kindling them that night again—'Sorrow tak ye,' thinks I, 'but I'll gie some o' ye a snifter!' So what does I do, but sends the shop-laddie awa to an ironmonger's for a pound o' pouther! 'Mortal man canna stand it!' says I; 'I'll blaw up the scoundrels!' I acknowledge it wasna just becoming the dignity o' the leading man in the toun-council to tak sic revenge. But I slipped awa round to the back o' the house wi' a big gimlet in my hand, and I bores holes in a dozen or twa o' the peats, on the north side o' the stack, and filled them wi' pouther; and having closed the holes, I was just gaun to tell them in the house no to tak ony peats off the north side o' the stack, when a circumstance occurred that drove it completely out o' my memory. Mrs. Gourlay had

an idle, worthless, half-gentleman sort o' a brother, and, to my utter astonishment and dismay, I found him sitting in the parlour when I went in. 'Brother Simon,' said he, stretching out his hand, 'I shall never forget your kindness.'

"'My kindness!' says I—'what do you mean?'

"'Mean!' said my wife, in her usual snappy, disdainful manner; 'on account of *our* vote—which, it is believed, will be the *casting* vote—think o' that, Simon Gourlay—Captain Oliver has promised my brother a place under government!"

"'My stars!' says I, 'a place under government!—*our* vote!—I think, ma'am, ye micht hae consulted *me* before ye bought a place for your brother wi' my vote; and, as my worthy faither used to observe, I maun be sure about the winning side before I promise onything o' the sort.'

"'Consult *you!*' cried she, like a firebrand—'consult *you*, indeed!—I'll tell ye what, Councillor Gourlay, if ye had a spark o' natural affection, as you ought to have, for your lawful wife, ye wad scorn to stand higgling about a paltry vote. But allow me to tell ye, sir, the thing is settled—ye *shall* vote for Captain Oliver; and, mair than that, I expect him and his friends to dine here this afternoon!'

"'Dine here!' says I, and was perfectly dumfoundered, as if a clap o' thunder had burst on my head. I felt I really was becoming a cipher in my ain house.

"'Yes, sir—dine here,' continued she; 'and see that ye mak them welcome, and be proud o' the honour.'

"I slipped awa into the shop, and I took out the Glasgow manufacturer's letter, and I thought it was a terrible thing to be in debt, but still worse to be henpecked; but to be baith henpecked and in debt, was warse than death itsel'. I remained in a state of stupifaction until about three o'clock, when I was *ordered* to dress for dinner. Between four and five o'clock, Captain Oliver and several of his friends made their appearance. How I conducted mysel', I'm sure I canna say—I was dowie enough, but I tried to put the best face upon it that I could. Everything passed owre weel enough until after the cloth was withdrawn; and then wine was set upon the table, and speerits for them that preferred them, and the kettle was put upon the fire to keep boiling for the toddy. The servant lassie put twa or three

peats on the fire; and just as she was gaun out o' the room, I remembered about the pouther! Never was human being in such a mortal state o' perturbation before. The sweat broke a' owre me. I rose and intended to rin down stairs, just to say that 'I hoped, in the name o' safety, she hadna taen the peats off the north side o' the stack!' However. I had hardly reached the stair-head, and the sneck of the door was still in my hand, when—good gracious!—sic an explosion!—sic a shout o' terror!—sic a tumblin' o' chairs and a breakin' o' glasses! I banged into the room; it was full o' smoke, and the smell o' sulphur was dreadfu'. 'Are ony o' ye hurt?' says I. There was groanin' and swearin' on ilka hand; and some o' them cried 'Seize him!'—'Seize me!' cried I—'goodness, sirs, wad ye seize a magistrate in his ain house!' The lid o' the kettle was blawn up the chimney, the kettle itsel' was driven across the table, wi' its boiling contents scattered right and left, and nae small portion o' them poured owre the precious person o' Captain Oliver! Oh! it was terrible!—terrible!—sic a dilemma as I never witnessed in my born days. I was in a situation that was neither to be explained nor described. Some o' them were fearfully scalded an' scorched, too; an' naething would satisfy them, but that I intended to blow up the Captain an' the company! It was a second 'Gunpouther Plot' to secure the election o' Mr. Wood! 'How did I answer,' said they, 'for the pouther being in the peats at all? and why did I leave the room in confusion, at the very moment it was about to take place?' 'Oh!' thought I, as they put the questions, 'what a lamentable situation is mine for ony man, but especially a magistrate, to be in!' As for Mrs. Gourlay, instead of sympathising for my distress, she fled at me like a teeger, an' sezied me by the hair o' the head before them a'. Weel, the upshot was, that I was taen before my brother magistrates; and, sinking wi' shame as I was, I tauld the naked truth, an' was very severely admonished. I admitted that I had acted very indiscreetly, an' very unbecoming a member o' the council; but I assured them on my solemn oath, that I hadna dune sae wi' malice in my heart. They a' kenned me to be a very quiet inoffensive man, an' the Captain's party agreeing that, if I voted for him the next day, they would push the matter no farther, I gied

him my hand an' promised, an' the business was dropped. But the next day, the great day of election, came. Until I had promised, the numbers o' the candidates were equal; and, sure enough, mine was the important—the *casting* vote. Weel, just as I was stepping down to the toun-house, wi' my een fixed upon the gronnd—for I was certain that everybody was looking at me—some person tapped me upon the shoulder, an' I looked up an' there was a sheriff's officer! A kind o' palsy ran owre me frae head to foot in a moment! 'Mr. Gourlay,' said the man, 'I am sorry to inform ye that ye are my prisoner.'

"'Is it possible?' said I. 'Weel, if ye'll just allow me to gang up an' vote, I'll see about bail.'

"'Ye may come into the public-house here,' said he; 'but I canna allow ye to vote, nor to go out o' my sicht.'

"Weel, I was arrested for the debt that I owed to the manufacturer. It was gey heavy, and during an election though it was, I found bail wasna to be had. I voted nane that day, an' that night I went to jail. I lay there about three months, an', when I got free, I found that I was also freed from the persecution o' Mrs. Gourlay, who had broken a blood-vessel in a fit o' passion, an' during my imprisonment, was buried by the side o' her ain relations: an' such are the particulars o' my persecutions during an election; an' certainly, every reasonable an' feeling man will admit I had just enough o' it, an' mair than I deserved."

AN OLD TAR'S YARN.

SOME years ago, half a dozen friends and myself visited Greenwich Hospital. Our conductor was a weather-beaten middle-aged tar, whose larboard glim had been douced since boyhood with the small-pox, and his starboard fin was carried away by a chain shot. By the gold lace which he sported on his chapeau, the sleeves of his coat, &c., he appeared to hold the rank of boatswain in the college. He was a communicative old boy; and we felt indebted to his civilities. He, however, spurned the idea of being rewarded with money. "No, blow it!" he exclaimed, "not a tissey, not a single brown—but a drop of grog, gemmen, if you please." So saying, he led the way to a neighbouring tavern, and entrenched himself in a corner of the parlour, with which he seemed intimately familiar. I placed myself at his elbow with the intention of drawing from him some favourite yarn. During the first glass he spoke only of the hospital; during the second, he advanced to actions and bombardments; but, as he finished the third, as if to induce us to call for a fourth, he said, "But it's of no use talking about battles and them sort of things; gemmen, by your leave, I'll tell you a bit of a story—it's a story that has made many a brave fellow waste his salt water; and, by the way, I may say it's about a countryman of your own, too—for Tom Beaumont was born in Newcastle, and he was a boy, man, and mate, and master of a Shields collier, many a long day. During our last scuffle with the Yankees, I was master-gunner of as handsome a gun-brig as ever did credit to a dock-yard, or deeped a keel in the water. Love ye, it would have done your eyes good to have seen her skimming before the wind, and breasting the billows as gently as a

boy's first kiss, which only touches the cheek, and that's all. Then we carried fourteen as pretty guns as ever drove a bullet through a Frenchman's timbers. Old Tom Beaumont —(God bless him!)—was our commander, and a better soul never cracked a biscuit. He was a hardy seaman to the backbone, an up-right and down-straight fear-nothing; but the kindest-hearted fellow in the world, for all that. Well, gemmen, as I'm saying—Tom (we always called him Tom, because we loved him) married young, and, for two years he was the happiest dog alive. He had a wife as pretty as an angel, and as good as himself; and a little rogue their son—the very picture of his own face in a button—who was beginning to climb upon his knee and pull his whiskers. Man alive couldn't desire more—the very scene might make a Dutchman dance, or a Russian happy. After two years fair wind and weather, however, in all mortal reckoning it was reasonable to expect squalls. Beaumont had not then joined the navy in a regular way; and at that period he found it necessary to proceed to America, where he had entered into extensive mercantile speculations. Finding that he should be compelled to remain there much longer than he dreamed of, he sent for his wife and child. They sailed—but it proved a last voyage to a new world. However, gemmen, it's a voyage we must all take, from the admiral down to the cabin boy—that's one comfort; and may we, by the aid of a good chart, steer clear of the enemy's lee-shore and brimstone shoals! Poor Tom's inquiries were fruitless; no one ever heard of the vessel, and no one ever doubted that all hands were as low as Davy Jones. It was like a shot between wind and water to Beaumont; but he bore up after a way, though it had shivered his mainsheet. Well, as I was saying, it was during our last scuffle with the Yankees, more than twenty years after Tom had lost his wife and child—we were returning with the little brig from the West Indies, when I was roused in my hammock by a bustle upon deck, and the cry of 'A Yankee!' I sprang up at the glorious news, and through the clear moonlight perceived an impudent-looking lubber bearing upon us full sail, and displaying American colours. 'Haul to, my lads!' cried old Beaumont; let them smell powder for breakfast.' Small time was lost in obeying the order; for we were always in

readiness for welcome company. Twice they attempted to board us, but were driven back for their kindness with some score of broken heads, and the loss of some hundred American fingers. After two hours' hard peppering, Beaumont, seizing a lucky moment, ordered us to throw in a broadside. Every shot told: the Yankee began to stagger, and in a few minutes gave evidence that her swimming days were ended. 'Vast firing!' cried Beaumont; 'let us save a brave enemy.' He repeated the word enemy; and I heard him mutter, 'flesh of our own flesh.' The vessel was riddled like the lid of a pepper-box, and sank so rapidly that we were able to save only thirty of her crew. Their captain was among the number, and a gallant looking youth he was; but in their last attempt to board us, Beaumont had wounded him on the shoulder with his cutlass. The blood ran down his arm, and poured from his fingers; yet the brave soul never whispered it, nor made a wry face upon the matter, but stood and saw his countrymen attended to. Nature, however, gave way, and he fell upon the deck. Beaumont eagerly raised him in his arms, and conveyed him to his own bed. On examining his wound, the surgeon took the portrait of a beautiful lady from his breast, and handed it to the commander. Poor old Tom gazed upon it for a moment—he started—he uttered a sudden scream—I thought he had gone mad. 'Do you remember that face?' he exclaimed. How could I forget it!—to have seen it once was to remember it a hundred years—it was his wife's! I won't tire you with a long story," continued the narrator, "for it's all true, and no yarn. For several days the gallant young American lay delirious, as the doctor called it. But—I can't describe it to you, gemmen—had you seen poor old Tom, during all that time! No, hang me, I can't describe it! The youth also wore upon his finger a diamond ring, upon which were inscribed the names of Beaumont and his long-lost Eleanor. Flesh and blood could not stand the sight—there was the old man keeping watch by the bedside, night and day, weeping like a child, pacing the cabin floor, beating his breast—and sometimes snatching the hand of the poor sufferer to his lips, and calling him his murdered son, and himself the murderer. Then, he would doubt again, and doubt made him worse. At length the doctor declared the invalid out of danger, and said

the commander might put to him any question he pleased. I wish I could tell you this scene; but I can't. However, there sat the full bursting hearted old boy, the big tears pouring down his cheeks, with the hand of the young American in his; and, sobbing like a child, he inquired 'Were you born an American?' The youth trembled—his heart filled, and he wept, just like old Tom. 'Alas!' said he, 'I know not; I have been educated an American. I only know that I was saved by the good old man who adopted me as his son, and who found me almost lifeless, in the arms of a dying woman, on the raft of a deserted wreck, which the winds had driven on shore. ' My unfortunate mother could only recommend me to his care, and died.' The very heart and soul of the old tar wept. 'And this portrait, and this ring?' he exclaimed breathless, and shaking like a yacht in a hurricane. 'The portrait,' replied the youth, 'was a part of what my mother had saved from the wreck, and, as I was told by my foster-father, is a likeness of herself. The ring was taken from her finger, and from the engraving upon it, I have borne the name of Beaumont. 'My son!—my own Tom!—child of my Eleanor!' cried the happy old father, hugging him to his breast. Gemmen, you can imagine the rest," said our one-armed companion; and, raising the fourth glass to his lips, he added, "and by your permission here's a health to old Tom Beaumont, and his son, Heaven bless them!"